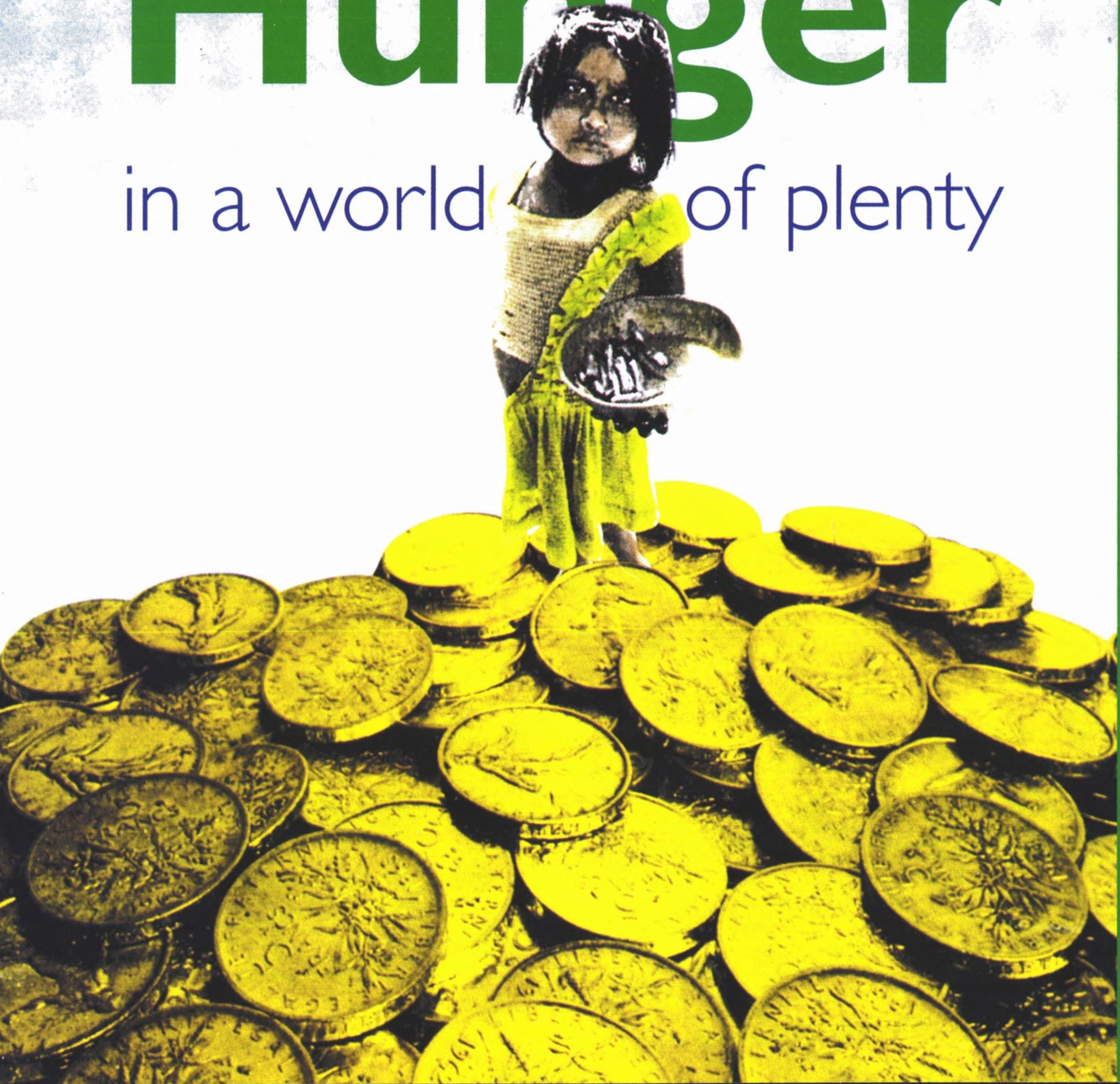
No. 267 / MAY 1995

THE NI
NEW INTERNATIONALIST

Hunger

in a world of plenty



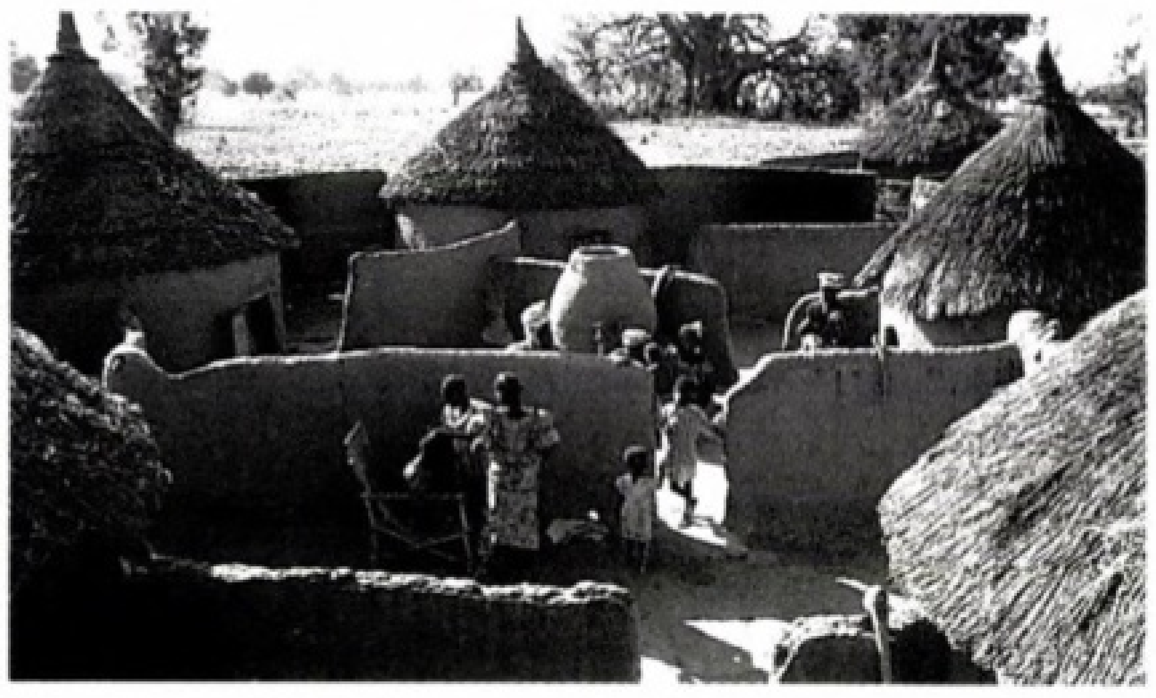
MONTHLY UK £1.90 AUS. $4.75 AOTEAROA/NZ $4.50 CANADA/US $3.50 SA R9.50

◆

THE PEOPLE, THE IDEAS, THE ACTION IN THE FIGHT FOR WORLD DEVELOPMENT

COMING NEXT MONTH

The inside story of an African village



Most Africans have no more contact with famine and war than we do. Far from the headline stories of Somalia and Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Burundi, villagers all over the continent are quietly making ends meet, seeking to make as good a life as possible for themselves and their families. **New Internationalist** co-editor Chris Brazier returns to a village in Burkina Faso he visited ten years ago to see how people's lives have changed. How have they been affected by another decade of 'development'?

- **Four wives, one God** – Once the focus of an **NI** film, Zenabou has seen her husband take two more wives since we last met her. How does she feel about it? And how is polygamy surviving the influence of modernization?
- **A few bottles of pills** – A gift of some aspirins launches the **NI** down a troubled road full of potholes marked 'aid', 'health' and 'democracy'.
- **The razor's end** – How the battle against female genital mutilation is being won.
- **The Chief, the Revolution and the New Man** – Once left to its ancient traditions, the village learned its politics from one of the most hopeful and imaginative revolutions in African history.
- **Rich world, poor world** – How plausible does a One World message sound to a village on the wrong side of the Great Divide?

SUBSCRIBER SERVICE GUIDE

If you have a problem with your subscription please contact us immediately. When writing or phoning it will help us to find your file quickly if you can advise us of your subscription reference, which is the left side number immediately above your name on your magazine envelope label.

Subscription orders and all subscription inquiries should be sent to:

New Internationalist
PO Box 79, Hertford
SG14 1AQ, UK

Tel: From UK: 01992 822899
From abroad: 044-1992-822899

Fax: From UK: 0171-830-8585
From abroad: 044-171-830-8585

1 Changing your address

Please provide your complete old and new addresses. Our labels are printed mid-month and therefore, in general, changes which reach us before the 10th of the month are actioned for the following month's magazine.

2 Missed copies

Occasionally copies go astray, for a variety of reasons. If you do miss an issue, please let us know and we will immediately send you another.

3 Extra copies

Subscribers are entitled to order extra copies of the current issue at the special price of £1.20. Please use the order form inside the back cover of the magazine.

4 Mailing lists

Occasionally the New Internationalist exchanges its list of subscribers with carefully screened organisations whose programmes, products or services may be of interest to you. If you do not wish to receive these mailings, please advise us and we will delete your name from the list of those we make available.

5 Advertising

The New Internationalist encourages advertising that is likely to be of interest to subscribers. Details of the advertising rates, or a list of the criteria used to screen advertisers, is available from the editorial offices.

The **New Internationalist** strives to provide a prompt and efficient service for our subscribers. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

ISSN 03050 9529

New Internationalist exists to report on the issues of world poverty and inequality; to focus attention on the unjust relationship between the powerful and powerless in both rich and poor nations; to debate and campaign for the radical changes necessary within and between those nations if the basic material and spiritual needs of all are to be met; and to bring to life the people, the ideas and the action in the fight for world development.

The **New Internationalist** magazine is published by New Internationalist Publications Ltd which is wholly owned by the New Internationalist Trust and co-operatively run by: *Vanessa Baird, Chris Brazier, Wayne Ellwood, Nikki van der Gaag, Fran Harvey, Alan Hughes, Gill Moore, Ian Nixon, Clive Offley, David Ransom, James Rowland, Richard Swift, Dexter Tiranti, Alison Ware, Troth Wells, Michael York.*

The **New Internationalist** magazine was founded by Peter and Lesley Adamson in 1970.

SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES

Please write to your subscription office with full details including (if possible) your subscription number shown on the magazine address label. Please inform us of any change of address.

SUBSCRIPTION OFFICES AND ANNUAL PRICES

UK: PO Box 79, Hertford, SG14 1AQ Tel. (01992) 822899
Individuals £22.70 p.a.; £6.30 qtly. Institutions £45

Canada: 35 Riviera Drive, Unit 17, Markham, Ontario L3R 8N4. Tel. (905) 946-0407 Fax. (905) 946-0410
Individuals 1 yr – $38.50 (includes $2.94 GST)
Overseas (by air) 1 yr – $53.50
Institutions 1 yr – $64.20 (includes $4.20 GST)
GST Reg No R121784854

United States: PO Box 1143, Lewiston, NY 14092. Tel. (905) 946 0407. Fax. (905) 946 0410.
Individuals 1 yr – $35.98 Overseas (by air) 1 yr – $50; Institutions 1 yr – $60

Australia and PNG: 7 Hutt Street, Adelaide, S.A., 5000. Tel. (08) 2321563
Individuals A$46.50; Institutions A$58.00.

Aotearoa/New Zealand: PO Box 4499, Christchurch.
Individuals $47; Institutions $55 (includes GST).

South Africa: Freepost JH125, PO Box 32797, Braamfontein 2017. Tel: (011) 358 2120 Fax: (011) 726 8430
Individuals R90; Institutions R150

Rest of the World: PO Box 79, Hertford, SG14 1AQ Tel. (01992) 822899
Individuals £28.50; Institutions £50. Please pay in sterling by UK Cheque, Eurocheque, Visa, Mastercard or Banker's Draft. Despatch by air only.

EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING OFFICES

UK: 55 Rectory Road, Oxford OX4 1BW. Tel. (01865) 728181. Fax. (01865) 793152. [Advertising: Tel. (01384) 373421. Fax. (01384) 441904]

Canada: 1011 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6H 1M1. Tel. (416) 588 6478. Fax: (416) 537 6435.

Australia: 7 Hutt Street, Adelaide, S.A. 5000. Tel. (08) 2321563

MAILINGS

Occasionally we allow organizations to mail our subscribers. If you do not wish to receive their material please write to your subscription office.

The **NI** is printed by Cradley Print Ltd, Warley, West Midlands, UK.

The **NI** is distributed to the UK news trade by COMAG Specialist Division, Mercury Centre, Central Way, Feltham, Middlesex TW14 0RX. Tel. (0181) 844 1000. Fax. (0181) 751 2666.

The **NI** in North America (USPS 329-770) is published monthly by **New Internationalist Publications**, 1011 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6H 1M1. Publications Contract 101400. Postage Paid at Toronto. US 2nd class postage paid at Lewiston, NY (USPS 329-770). US Post-master send address changes to: **New Internationalist**, PO Box 1143, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index, CPI CD-ROM, CPI Online, the Canadian Magazine Index, CBCA OnDisc and the Alternative Press Index.

Syndication/Permissions: Sonja Singleton, Cover Stories, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1, UK.Tel: 0171 278 2332. Fax: 0171 837 1192.

Reproduction of all material in **NI**, excluding photographs, is free for use by schools.

The **New Internationalist** magazine is printed on environmentally friendly paper.

© New Internationalist Publications Ltd.

The Climate is changing!
Government policies aren't!
What about YOU?

WHY DON'T THEY DO SOMETHING?

May 15th is Climate Action Day

A day to put pressure on government & business, while raising consumer awareness. 80% of greenhouse gases are produced by industrialised countries - its time to stop our dirty habits.

GREEN *Line* **MAGAZINE**

Send £1 for sample to:
PO Box 5
Lostwithiel PL22 0YT

ETHICAL INVESTORS GROUP

WHAT COMPANY DOES YOUR MONEY KEEP?

ALL *ETHICAL SPECIALISTS* ARE NOT THE SAME

We provide advice exclusively on ethical and green investments
We will not make money from people's ethical concerns whilst promoting investments in companies which damage the environment.
We distribute at least 50% of our own profits to charities and campaigning groups chosen by our clients, at no extra cost to our clients.
We are not part of a mainstream brokerage.
We hold professional qualifications and provide a countrywide financial service.

We can arrange:
Personal Pensions • Additional Voluntary Contribution Plans
Pension Transfers • Life Assurance • Regular Savings
Endowments • Lump Sum Investments • Discretionary Fund Management

For dedicated Independent Financial advice contact Lee Coates A.C.I.I., MSFA
ETHICAL INVESTORS GROUP: Head Office, Milestone, Greet Road, Greet, Cheltenham
GL54 5BG Telephone & Fax: (01242) 604550
Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority

Please Tick where appropriate
☐ **Free ethical/green review of existing policies**
☐ **Retirement Planning**
☐ **Lump Sum Investment**
☐ **Life Assurance and protection**
☐ **Regular savings**

Ms / Mr / Mrs..
Address..
....
....
Tel: Work..
Home..

Ethical Investors Group is the trading name of **Ethical Investors (U.K.)** Ltd. Registered No 2857294 England.

NI

THE GENESIS PEP, AN HONEST OPTION FOR CARING INVESTORS

Ethical
FINANCIAL
THE GENESIS FUND

The very best in Socially Responsible Investment.

☎ 24 HRS 0446 741743 FIMBRA

AN APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVE OF INVESTMENT OPTIONS LTD

UNIQUE

THE KINGSWOOD THIRD WORLD FUND

For: • Investment • Pensions • Mortgages • Life Assurance

Did you know that you can invest in the poor of the Third World with little risk? The Kingswood Third World Fund is a unique means of channelling your money to the areas of greatest need in a safe and potentially profitable manner. All investments are vetted.

For further information contact **Mike Daniels**, a member of the World Development Movement

KINGSWOOD CONSULTANTS
(in association with Glavey & Co.)
Founding member of the UK Social Investments Forum

Member of the **PIA** Personal Investment Authority

Please return this advert with your name, address & telephone no. for more details
FREEPOST 68 Sheep Street, Bicester Oxon. OX6 7BR
Tel: Bicester (0869) 252545
Statutory warning: The value of an investment can fall as well as rise.
Fimbra Statutory notice: Fimbra does not regulate mortgages.

GIVEN THE CHOICE,

wouldn't you invest your money 'ethically'?

If you are investing in a unit trust, a personal pension or a life assurance, the fund behind it is probably holding the shares of companies who do things you don't believe in. Pacifists are investing in armaments firms, teetotallers in breweries. ASH supporters are investing in tobacco conglomerates, environmentalists in companies with a bad pollution record. And so on…

But it doesn't have to be that way.

*Barchester specialises in identifying those investments which put the energy of your money in the direction of your values. In the pensions field, for instance, the longest established of these funds has outperformed 95% of all individual UK Growth pension funds over the last 10 years.**

So 'ethical/green' investment doesn't have to be unprofitable.
And 'profit' doesn't have to be a dirty word.

Why not ring us (24 hrs) on 0722 331241, or send the coupon.

Regulated by the
PIA
Personal • Investment • Authority
*To 1.6.94 (*Micropal*)

BARCHESTER
- Giving you the choice
- ESTABLISHED 1985 -

To: **BARCHESTER GREEN INVESTMENT,**
45/49 Catherine St, FREEPOST, Salisbury SP1 1BR.
Please tell me more about ethical/green options in personal finance.
Name: .... Address: ....
.... Tel: ....

Remember, the price of units can fall as well as rise and past performance is not a guarantee to the future.

THE BLUE BOOK SERIES

United Nations and Apartheid
1948-1994

The central role played by the United Nations in supporting the struggle against Apartheid, and in focusing world-wide attention on South Africa is analysed in this publication. In an extensive introduction the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali gives an overview of the country's historic transformation. Over 200 key UN documents are gathered together including :-

- Resolutions of the United Nations
- International legal instruments
- Statements by President Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Chief Albert J Luthuli

ISBN 92 1 100546 9 565 pages £22

The Blue Book Series illustrates the work of the UN from peace-keeping and conflict resolution to development and human rights.

Forthcoming titles in this series include:-
United Nations and Cambodia 1991-1994
United Nations and El Salvador 1990-1995
United Nations and Mozambique 1992-1994
United Nations and Human Rights 1948-1995

For further information or a copy of the latest UN Publications Catalogue please call 0171 873 8365.

HMSO Books

UN Publications are available in the UK from HMSO Bookshops, and Agents (see Yellow Pages: Booksellers) Mail order: HMSO Publications Centre, PO Box 276, London SW8 5DT (post and packing free). Credit card orders: 0171 873 9090 Fax 0171 873 8200.

Please note that exchange rate fluctuations do mean that prices are liable to change without notice.

> ***"For almost three years I was totally deprived of contact with the outside world and for much of the time had no access to news of any kind. So, when I did get my first magazine via the charity Prisoners Abroad, my world suddenly became much larger than my small cell. I still had so much to catch up on. I had no idea what the Chernobyl factor was or who Diana and Fergie were, and I certainly did not know what Mrs Thatcher said at Bruges."***
>
> *Roger Cooper, April 1991*

Roger Cooper spent five years in Evin prison in Iran, one of the most feared prisons in the world. He was accused of spying for Britain and received the sentence of death plus ten years. Roger has campaigned tirelessly on behalf of Prisoners Abroad since his release.

For a gift of just £24, a British prisoner somewhere in the world will receive their monthly copy of New Internationalist.

Prisoners Abroad is the only UK charity caring for over 1,100 British prisoners in some 63 different countries. Often held in unimaginable squalor, thousands of miles from their families, isolated by language and cultural differences, we offer them real hope and practical support. You can help too by taking out a subscription for your favourite magazine, which we will send to a British prisoner abroad. Thanks to the publishers a year's subscription to New Internationalist will only cost you £24 and will be worth its weight in gold to a prisoner somewhere who is just waiting for us to send it. We have a long list of prisoners anxious to receive their monthly copy.

PLEASE REMEMBER BRITAIN'S FORGOTTEN PRISONERS DONATE A SUBSCRIPTION TODAY

Please return to: Prisoners Abroad, Freepost, 82 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1B 1XB

I would like to donate .... New Internationalist annual subscription(s) for Prisoners Abroad to send to Britons overseas.
I enclose a donation of (£24 per annual subscription)
£24 ☐ £48 ☐ £72 ☐ £96 ☐ ☐ £............ (other)
(Cheques/PO made payable to Prisoners Abroad) or please debit my Access/Visa card no
☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name on Credit Card....................................
Card expiry date................ Signature..
Name..
Address ....
....
.... Postcode......................

PRISONERS ABROAD

Charity No 280030. Est. 1978

CONTENTS

CRISPIN HUGHES / PANOS

Hunger in a world of plenty 7
Eight hundred million people don't have enough to eat because they can't pay the price. ***Dinyar Godrej*** *argues the case for change.*

Bread 11
A poem from Sierra Leonean poet ***Syl Cheney-Coker****.*

Fields of memory 12
Experience and persistence bear fruit in Tigray, Ethiopia. ***Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher*** *sees the greening of the terraces.*

The Grim Reaper goes shopping 14
... to support his local superstore. ***PJ Polyp*** *follows the deadly trail.*

Attack of the shrimps 16
There's a crustacean on the loose in coastal Bangladesh and it's hitting people where it hurts. ***Philip Gain*** *investigates.*

HUNGER – THE FACTS 18

The cost of living 20
Why is Mary always hungry? A short story from Pakistan by ***Maria del Nevo****.*

Forbidden territory 22
Broken promises in the Philippines.

Captured by the Company 23
Like an oil slick, the Company has spread around the world. ***Brewster Kneen*** *takes stock of the mess.*

Simply – making the food go around 26

Crap Dinner and the Good Food Box 28
Murray MacAdam *discovers that Toronto's poor now have a choice.*

Jacqueline's garden 29
It doesn't grow flowers and it's not really a garden, but for some of São Paulo's hungry, it offers hope. ***Alex Shankland*** *reports on Brazil's Campaign Against Hunger.*

Letters 2
Letter from Russia 3
Update 4
The NI Interview with **Sarah Schulman** 31
Reviews: plus **Andy Goldsworthy** classic 32
Curiosities 34
Endpiece: by **Ian Kentzer** 35
Country profile: Ukraine 36

FRONT COVER ART BY **CLAUDE BAILLARGEON**
MAGAZINE DESIGNED BY **IAN NIXON**

THIS MONTH'S **THEME**

Hunger

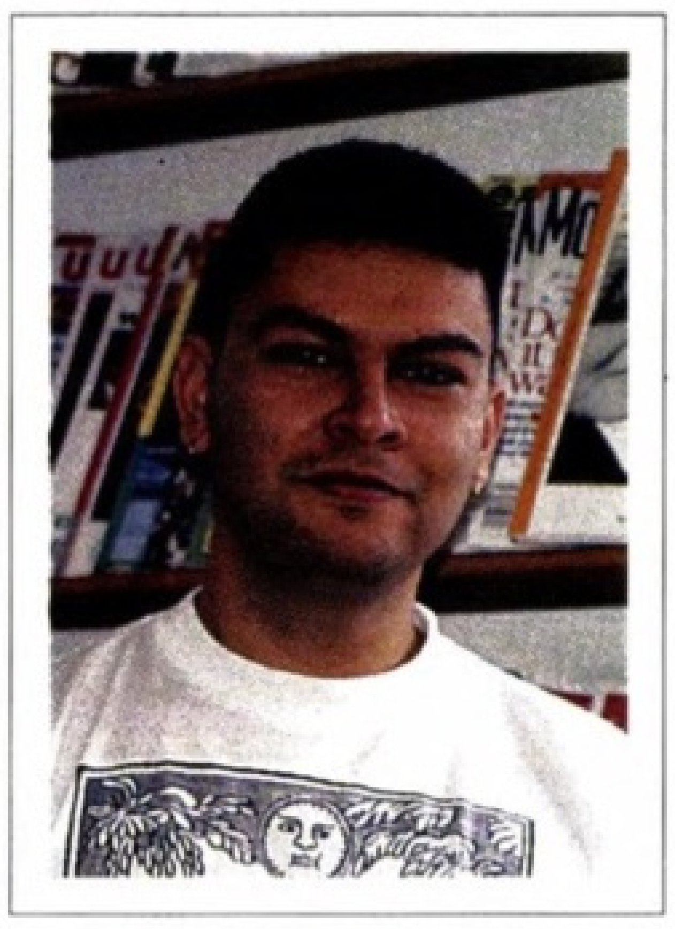
FROM THIS MONTH'S **EDITOR**

WE'RE now seven months on from our Annual Editorial Meeting, our very own 'AEM', a time of chewing the cud over all the vital issues – there appeared to be several hundred thousand – we ought to cover in the **NI.**

I seem to recall that there were some irresistible mushroom sandwiches with a fierce amount of garlic in them that also got chewed, and it was in garlic-scented environs that this issue was first discussed.

Quite apart from worrying that my breath could have kept vampires at bay, I was a bit diffident about holding forth, being a recent addition to the **NI** team. I was also surprised by how retro I sounded, talking about hunger in the 1990s. It all seemed so basic, so broad and so complex.

The group made generally positive noises, but we wondered whether there was anything left to say on the subject and whether readers didn't already know it all.



The last time we devoted an issue of the magazine to hunger was 10 years ago. And though I felt quite strongly that it was time to deal with it again, I was unsure how relevant it would be to talk in terms of 'hunger' at all. We tend nowadays to see the problem as an inevitable consequence of the numerous political and economic forces that govern our lives.

But there is another way of looking at it. By making hunger the basic issue – not having enough to eat is probably as basic as you can get – one can see the other problems as expressions of this central failing of our societies, the failure to provide everyone with enough food.

The problem of hunger is, for me, a moral problem. I like my food and I don't like the thought of hunger. Sometimes liking my food makes me feel bad about the hunger of others, and I like that even less. It's actually quite a simple, selfish morality – one I know other people share. This was perhaps my ulterior motive for doing this issue: I needed to understand and place this disquiet by clarifying the arguments for myself as well.

Because every time I got into the arguments I seemed to be entering from a different door, even though I knew the direction in which I was heading. There are so many different ways of accounting for shortages of food and so many things we need to change – not least our perceptions – in order to ensure that everyone has enough to eat.

So when the discussion at our meeting seemed to be tailing off, I summoned up memories of school debates, overcame my fear of halitosis and weighed in with something passionate – I forget the exact words. It worked. Everyone said yes, we really need to cover hunger again: and here, seven months later, it is.

Dinyar Godrej

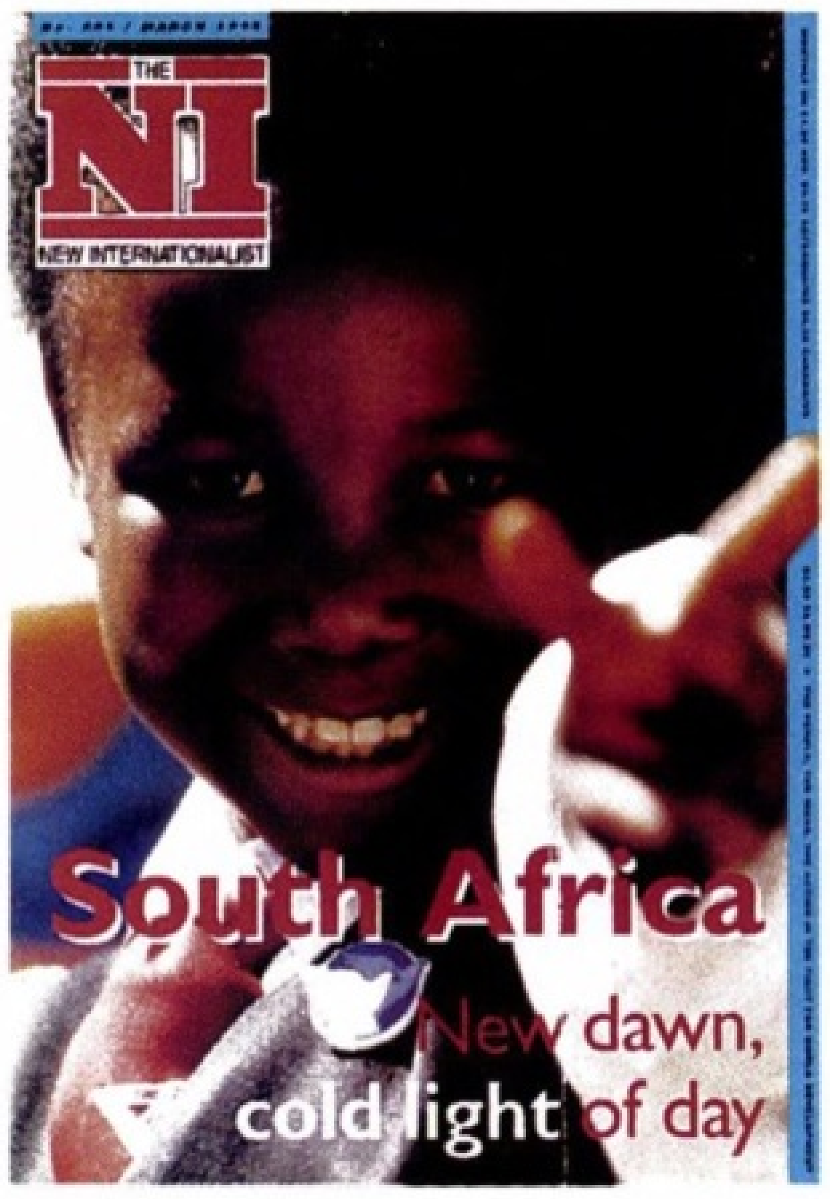
Dinyar Godrej
for the ***New Internationalist*** *Co-operative*

Letters

The New Internationalist welcomes your letters. But please keep them short. They may be edited for purposes of space or clarity. Include a home telephone number if possible and send your letters to the nearest editorial office. The address is inside the front cover.

Mhlaba's Mercs

I appreciated the realism of your issue on *South Africa* (**NI 265**). There is so much to be undone here, so much to do. We've inherited three civil services which we are supposed to combine and make efficient without upsetting anyone.



I'm told that a visit to the car park of the government buildings in Bisho, the capital of the Eastern Cape, reveals all. There you see a different Mercedes Benz model for each of the crazy puppet regimes we've had to live under. Mercs from the era of Mantanzima, who ran the former Transkei, and from Sebe and Gqozo of the former Ciskei. Mercs from the old provincial administration and now, sadly, Mhlaba Mercs, Hondas and BMW's. (Raymond Mhlaba is the premier of the Eastern Cape.)

All of their owners are now happily employed in the 'new' South Africa. Somehow it all looks the same. There's absolutely no interest in the local government elections due in October. The disillusionment is palpable – enough to try even the most courageous of optimists.

Charles Riddle
Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa

Age and sex

You wouldn't know, I dare say, being young yourselves and all, but the cartoon dealing with old people and sex in your issue on *Ageing* (**NI 264**) got it all wrong. Actually, advancing age is accompanied by declining interest in sex and declining ability as well. On the rare occasions when one does manage to complete the course, so to speak, as one stumbles wearily over the last hurdle, one's fleeting feeling of relief is tempered by the gloomy awareness that one may be called on to perform again, possibly in the not-too-distant future.

Children, on the other hand, are an absolute joy, just the thing to brighten one's later years. If only it were possible to produce children without going through the ordeal of screwing. Young people, of course, will find all this incomprehensible. Their powers are unimpaired and they find screwing great fun, but they regard children with the utmost fear and loathing. Just goes to show you how badly arranged the universe is!

Lloyd Betzner
Toronto, Canada

No fiddling

I have noticed a recurring habit in your magazine which raises serious moral problems. I refer to your practice of tinkering with international boundaries.

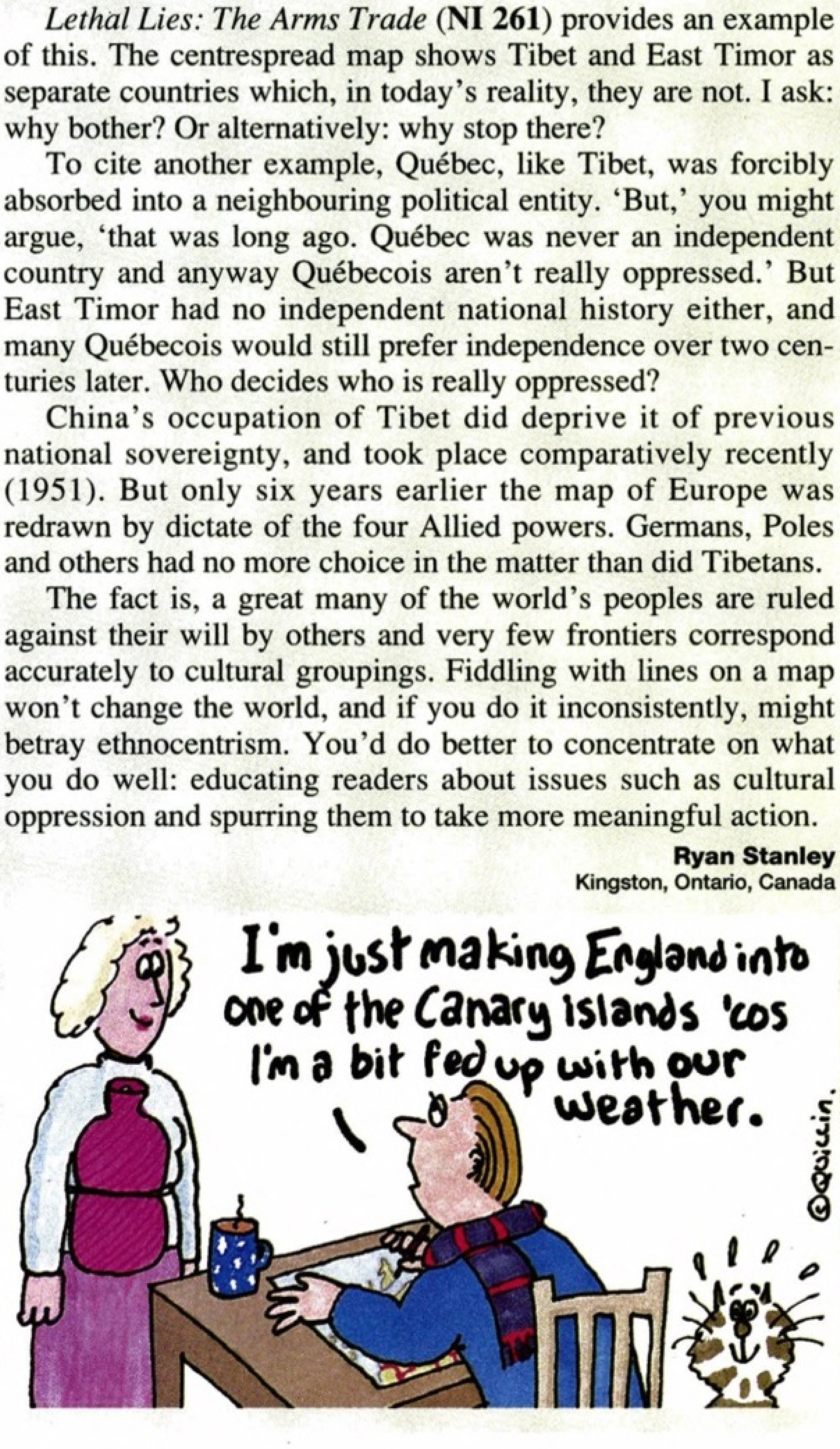
Lethal Lies: The Arms Trade (**NI 261**) provides an example of this. The centrespread map shows Tibet and East Timor as separate countries which, in today's reality, they are not. I ask: why bother? Or alternatively: why stop there?

To cite another example, Québec, like Tibet, was forcibly absorbed into a neighbouring political entity. 'But,' you might argue, 'that was long ago. Québec was never an independent country and anyway Québecois aren't really oppressed.' But East Timor had no independent national history either, and many Québecois would still prefer independence over two centuries later. Who decides who is really oppressed?

China's occupation of Tibet did deprive it of previous national sovereignty, and took place comparatively recently (1951). But only six years earlier the map of Europe was redrawn by dictate of the four Allied powers. Germans, Poles and others had no more choice in the matter than did Tibetans.

The fact is, a great many of the world's peoples are ruled against their will by others and very few frontiers correspond accurately to cultural groupings. Fiddling with lines on a map won't change the world, and if you do it inconsistently, might betray ethnocentrism. You'd do better to concentrate on what you do well: educating readers about issues such as cultural oppression and spurring them to take more meaningful action.

Ryan Stanley
Kingston, Ontario, Canada


I'm just making England into one of the Canary Islands 'cos I'm a bit fed up with our weather.
©Quillin.

VIV QUILLIN

Money talks

The same day that your issue on the *East Asian Economic Miracle* (**NI 263**) arrived, I received the latest issue of the Bristol University magazine. This recorded the visit here of Gorbachev and Princess Anne. Yet the picture on the front was of a visiting Malaysian Government Minister. The reason he was given pre-eminence is simple – Malaysia's economic growth means that they can afford to send a large number of students here to study, and their money talks.

When economic success earns the country's leaders that kind of respect (witness as well the response to the Pergau dam affair and the way the British Government tried to placate Malaysian Government feelings), when the standard of living is rising and when infant-mortality rates are falling so fast, is it surprising that the Government believes it is on the right track? To convince the Malaysians that political and trade-union freedom are important you will have to convince them that it is in their long-term economic interest to change their policies. Otherwise you are all in danger of being accused by such countries of resenting the success of former colonies.

John Suffolk
Bristol, England

Kurds and the press

I am astonished to observe the British press in general downplay what may be the most outrageous attack on press freedoms in contemporary history. For example, the bomb attack carried out on three offices of the pro-Kurdish newspaper, the *Ozgur Ulke*, last December. The attack left one person dead and 23 wounded.

It came only four days after Turkey's military-dominated National Security Council held a meeting in which a decision was taken to silence Kurdish aspirations and demands. Both the Turkish Chief of General Staff and the Interior Minister are on the record saying immediately before the bombings that '*Ozgur Ulke* should be stopped'.

Journalists like myself writing for the paper are constantly threatened with death. Many of its employees have been detained and tortured by Turkish police. Kiosks selling the paper are routinely bombed and the 10- to 15-year-old street sellers are killed.

Ozgur Ulke is a continuation of *Ozgur Gundem*, which was closed down in April 1994 following systematic attacks: 15 of its journalists were killed and 330 separate court cases were launched.

Ozgur Ulke continues to print through different offices and facilities these days, owing only to the immense sacrifices of its staff, who are dedicated to press freedoms in a country like Turkey where the majority of the media is under direct or indirect state control. The attack in December was, as far as I am aware, the biggest attack of this kind in the past decade. An attack which we Turkish and Kurdish journalists can only fight with our pens, but more importantly with the knowledge that solidarity between journalists constitutes the main guarantee of press freedom. Do we ask too much?

Ismet Imset
Ozgur Ulke, Istanbul, Turkey

People's will

I would like to thank all those people who wrote the stream of letters received by the Governor of the state of Georgia, prison officials and me. Your vigorous objections to the letter-writing ban imposed on me finally won the day! The ban has now been lifted.

Officials would never admit it openly, but we know that it was your individual letters that did this.

The lesson to be learned from all of this is that we must not quietly stand by in the face of bureaucratic terror. Individually and collectively the will of the people is strong. A lot of you went beyond lip service and we are all grateful and the better for it. Keep writing!

Brandon Astor Jones
EF-122216, G251, GDCC, PO Box 3877,
Jackson, Georgia 30233, US

The views expressed on the letters page are not necessarily those of the New Internationalist.

Bribery in the rain

Olivia Ward finds herself trapped by a moral dilemma.

IT was a dark and stormy night – the favorite kind of night for bad crime novels, Moscow crooks and the traffic police.

I was confronted by the heart-stopping sight of the latter while driving back from a friend's flat at an hour when no innocent Muscovite is abroad. He was waving a white baton.

What had I done? The rain was too heavy for fast driving, and no traffic lights kept the unruly in order. There wasn't even a cunning Stop sign lying in wait for the careless.

Knowing better than to argue with a traffic cop – who carries a handy gun and keeps in practice by tyre-shooting – I pulled over.

He beckoned to me insolently. At three in the morning on a dark street in a rainstorm I was to get out of my locked automobile.

Tales of robbery and mayhem by police impostors reeled through my mind. I reached for my trusty Swiss Army knife along with my credentials. It was small, but I could wave it menacingly.

The cop scarcely glanced at my licence.

'Your car is dirty,' he said with a malicious smile.

In Russia a dirty car is still an offence, albeit an inescapable one for any driver who ventures into the sludge of the road. But police in search of ready cash use it to full advantage.

'The car was washed yesterday,' I responded feebly.

'Well, it's dirty now.'

Cutting short the small talk, he reached into his car and snapped on the light, pointing to the windscreen. In full view were two 10,000-rouble notes, the equivalent of about five dollars. As bribery went, it was cheap at the price. But it was still bribery. Something I was taught to recoil from in horror.

Since I came to this country two years ago I have managed to avoid it, unlike my less fortunate friends. Bribery is corrupting to both the briber and the bribee. Worse than robbery because it has the veneer of legitimacy: one must keep up the pretence of a fee for service while entering the pact of wrongdoing.

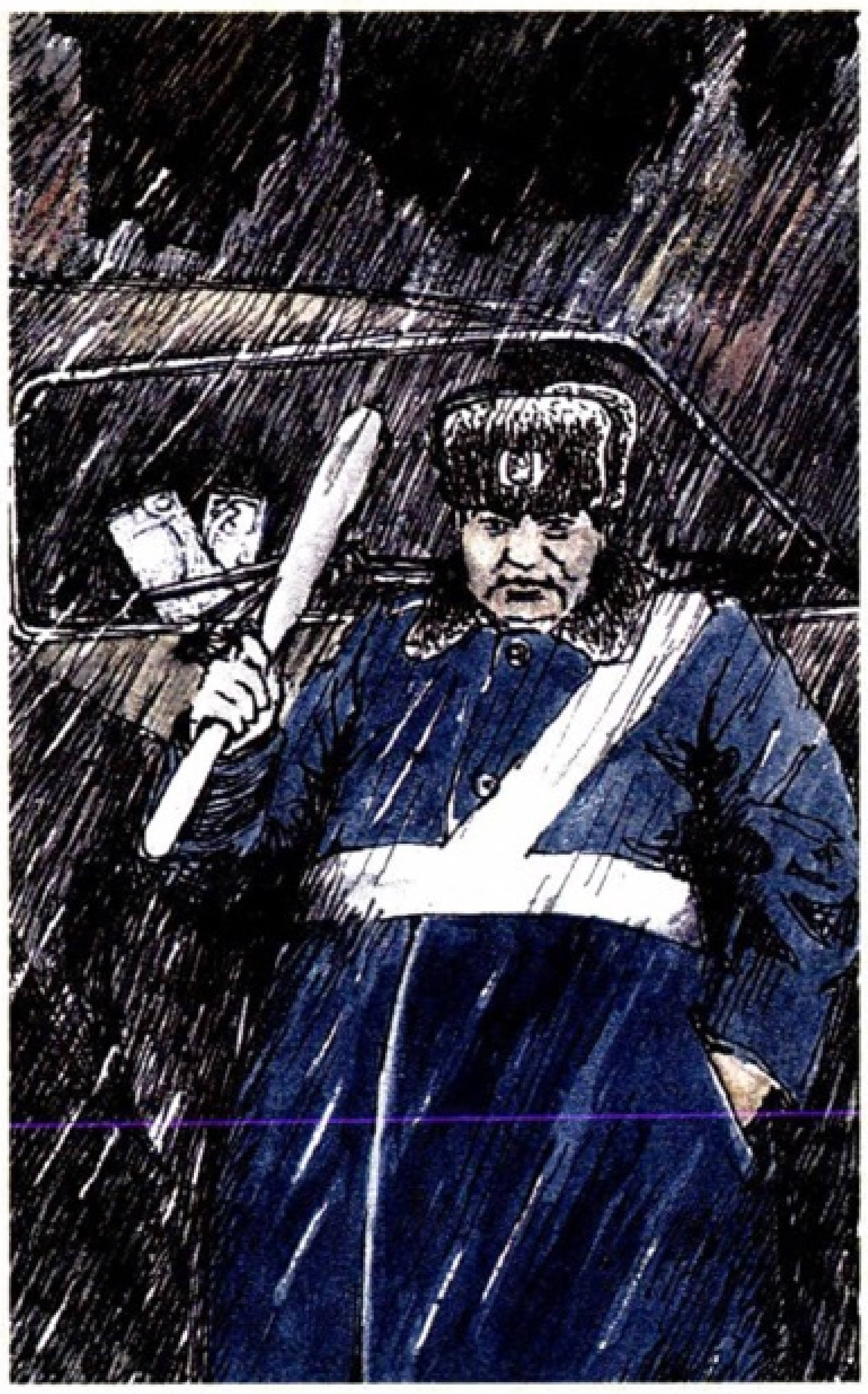
But this country is sticky with bribery and corruption that began hundreds of years ago and flourished in the Soviet era. Now capitalism red in tooth and claw has taken over and bribery is 'normalna', part of doing business. But it is crippling the system and making sure it will never be normal, convincing millions of people that they can become rich by withholding service rather than giving it.

Anya, trying to get a passport in time for a friend's wedding in Paris, was told three months wasn't enough. She resisted bribing a go-between to obtain the document – and missed the wedding.

'I'm not going to waste time any more,' she told me grimly, making plans to visit her now-married friend. 'I'm pretending it's part of the cost of the trip.'

Another friend, Sergei, held off a massive bribe demand for six months, refusing to grease the palms of licensing officials who always found a new loophole for not giving him his business papers. Eventually his exasperated director arranged the pay-off, which was costing the company millions of roubles in lost revenue.

Some Westerners ease their consciences by giving the task of bribery to their staff. Caught in traffic I would amuse myself wondering how many of the company drivers were delivering 'gifts', from vodka to briefcases full of cash.



JUDY HAMMOND

Now, soaked to the skin and shivering in the darkness, I was not amused. The cop held all the cards – my licence and credentials. Under a new rule, ironically aimed at reducing bribery, he would confiscate them until I paid a fine at a registered bank, an impossibility in the early hours of Sunday morning. Without my licence I could be jailed for driving a car.

I stared at him with fury. Fury at the system which reduced him to a petty crook and me to an accomplice. Fury at the complacency with which we all accepted the corruption. And fury at the sheer frustration of not knowing how it could be changed.

Reaching into my wallet I clawed out 20,000 rubles and threw them through the window of his car. With a weary grin he handed back the documents.

'Normalna!' he chuckled as I pulled away.

His voice was lost in the storm. ■

Olivia Ward is the Moscow bureau chief of the *Toronto Star*.

Update

SUDAN

Cleaning up: land sold beneath the feet of the Nuba.

JACK PICONE / NETWORK

Moving the mountains

Nuba people evicted to 'peace villages' as civil war continues.

THE Sudanese Government is continuing its policy of 'cleansing the mountains'. This is a euphemism for moving tens of thousands of people from their homes in the Nuba Hills and sending them to so-called 'Peace Villages'.

Escapees from these villages say that men were forced to join Government militias or become farm labourers, and women were sent to work as unpaid servants in the North of the country. Some young boys have been sold as slaves. A reporter travelling in Nuba country recently saw 'dozens if not scores of burnt-out and flattened villages'.

There is also evidence that the Government is expelling Nuba from Khartoum and other cities and sending them to 'Peace Villages' against their will. This development marks a new twist in the 'cleansing' campaign. Many Nuba moved to the cities in the first place because they had been driven from their lands. Those who have managed to remain in the Hills often find themselves working as labourers on their own land, which has been 'sold' by the authorities.

For years the Nuba Hills have been forcibly cut off from the outside world. No food, medicine or humanitarian agencies have been allowed into the region, except for Islamic agencies supported by the regime, which aim to proselytize among the Nuba. Two-thirds of the Nuba are Muslim and the other third mainly Christian, but these faiths overlap with older regional religious practice.

In January 1992 the Governor of Kordofan and the head of the pro-Government militia declared a *Jihad* (Holy War) against the Nuba. This was followed by a *Fatwa* (Islamic Decree) by prominent local Imams which justified the killing of the Nuba by describing them as 'infidels'. The Arab nomads of Kordofan, who have also been badly affected by the seizure and 'sale' of land, have been incited against their Nuba neighbours.

In November 1994 the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Sudan, Dr Gaspar Biro, repeated allegations of serious human-rights violations in the Nuba Hills. His written report was published on 14 February 1995 and indicates a further deterioration in the conditions of the Nuba.

It appears that the Sudanese Government is collaborating with local authorities who want to depopulate the area and help themselves to its rich agricultural land. ■

Aidan Rankin/Survival International

Deathly silence

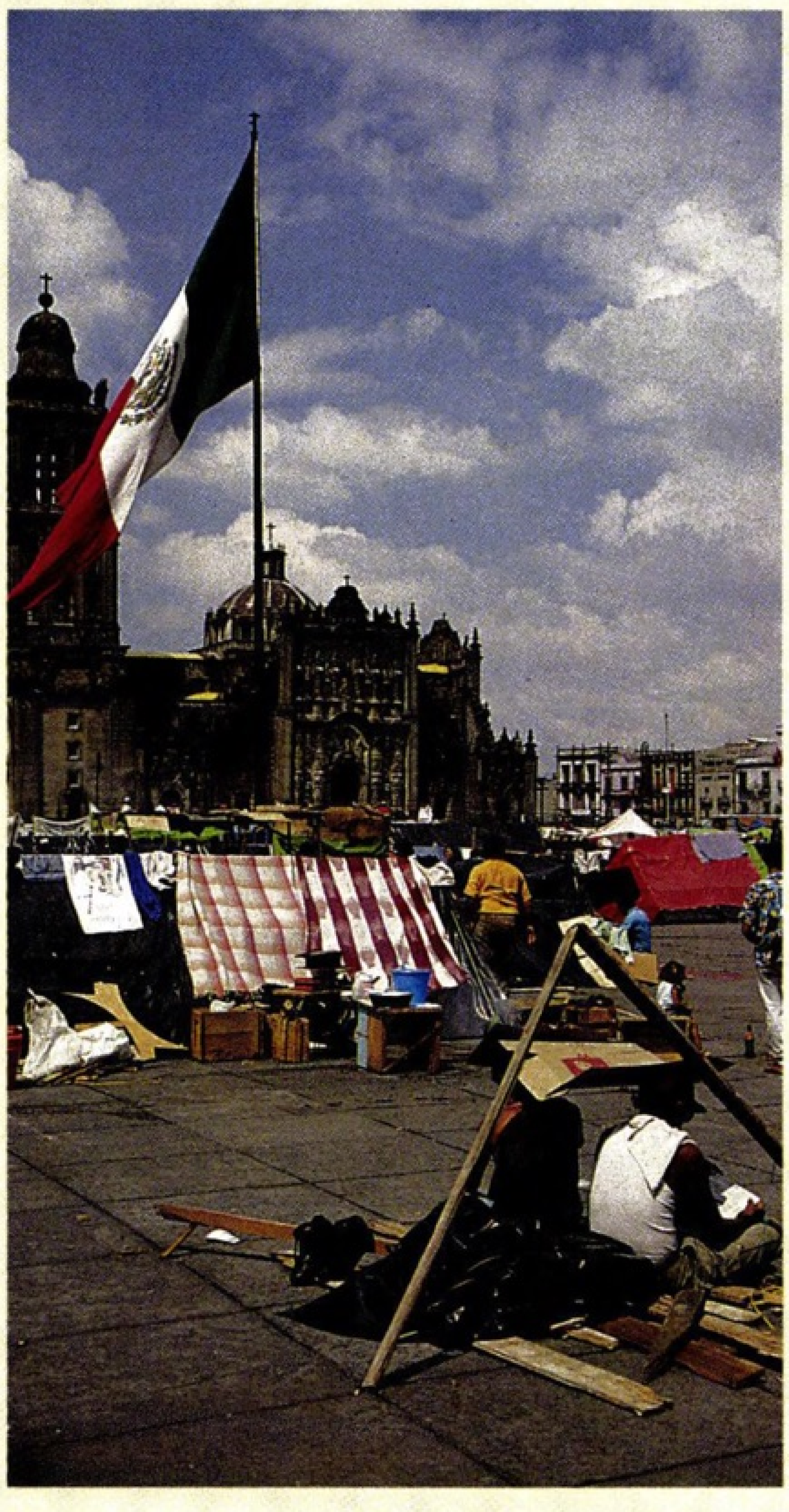
As the conflict between the Turkish Government and the Kurdish opposition continues, journalists are falling victim to the violence. In 1992-94, 32 Turkish journalists and other media employees, most working for pro-Kurdish newspapers, were murdered. More than 100 Kurdish and Turkish journalists and writers are currently imprisoned, many of them for active advocacy of a political solution to the conflict. Eastern Anatolia has become too dangerous for foreign journalists. There is a growing tendency in Turkey to blame foreign sources for the strife – articles by foreign observers are widely perceived as hostile and destructive.

Source: World Press Review Vol 42 No 3

Enough

Stung by the criticisms of the '50 Years is Enough' (FYE) campaign (see NI 257) the World Bank has issued a point-by-point rebuttal. On the question of 'structural adjustment' the Bank remains adamant, claiming that among the countries that 'have begun to enjoy benefits associated with the successful implementation of appropriate economic policies' is Mexico – a country which has been experiencing such a sudden and severe economic crisis that the ripple-effect threatens to destabilize the world's financial institutions.

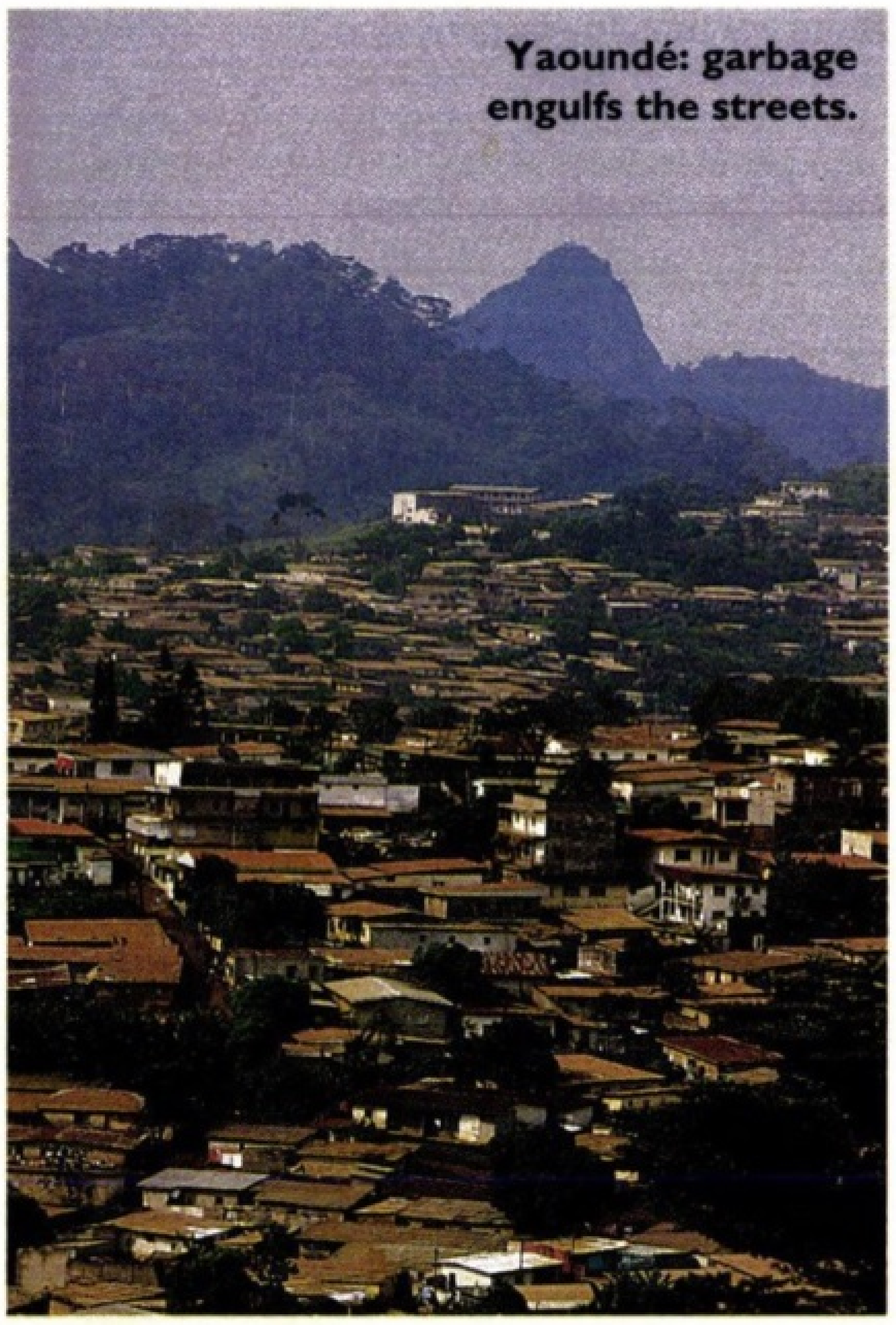
David Ransom



DAVID RANSOM

Beneficiaries of World Bank policy in Mexico City.

Sky's the limit


Yaoundé: garbage engulfs the streets.

GERARD SIOEN / RAPHO / NETWORK

The Cameroon Government has opened Africa's first ozone-monitoring office and pledged to phase out the use of chloroflourocarbons (CFCs) which damage the earth's ozone layer. Without denying the global problem of ozone depletion, it is still somewhat puzzling why Cameroon should be prioritizing it. An average Cameroonian annually consumes a tiny 8.7 grams of CFCs per head. With more than half the population lacking access to health services, locals are wondering what the fuss is all about. Environmental activists are pointing out that the Government would do better to stop the rapid commercial logging of forests. Citizens of Yaoundé, the capital, want to know why, when the Government claims to have no money to clear the garbage which threatens to engulf the city, it is launching a media campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of ozone depletion.

Source: Ndikum Patrick Tanifom/Gemini

Poor showing

Longtime NI contributors Mari Marcel and Stan Thekaekara have put together a widely praised report – *Across the Geographical Divide* – on the poor in Britain. The pair were flown in from the Nilgiris in South India to visit the housing estates of Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow. What they saw shocked them. Despite noting that poor people in Britain seemed to be better off than their Indian counterparts, they found that in Britain poverty often meant decades of unemployment and the increased loss of skills and initiative which was very different from the Indian experience. They were most struck by the demoralization amongst Britain's poor.

The report is available from Directory of Social Change, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP.
Tel: (+) 171 209 5151 at a cost of £10 (plus £2.50 p&p).

LONELY HEARTS

Fish seek bicycle

Singular complaints.

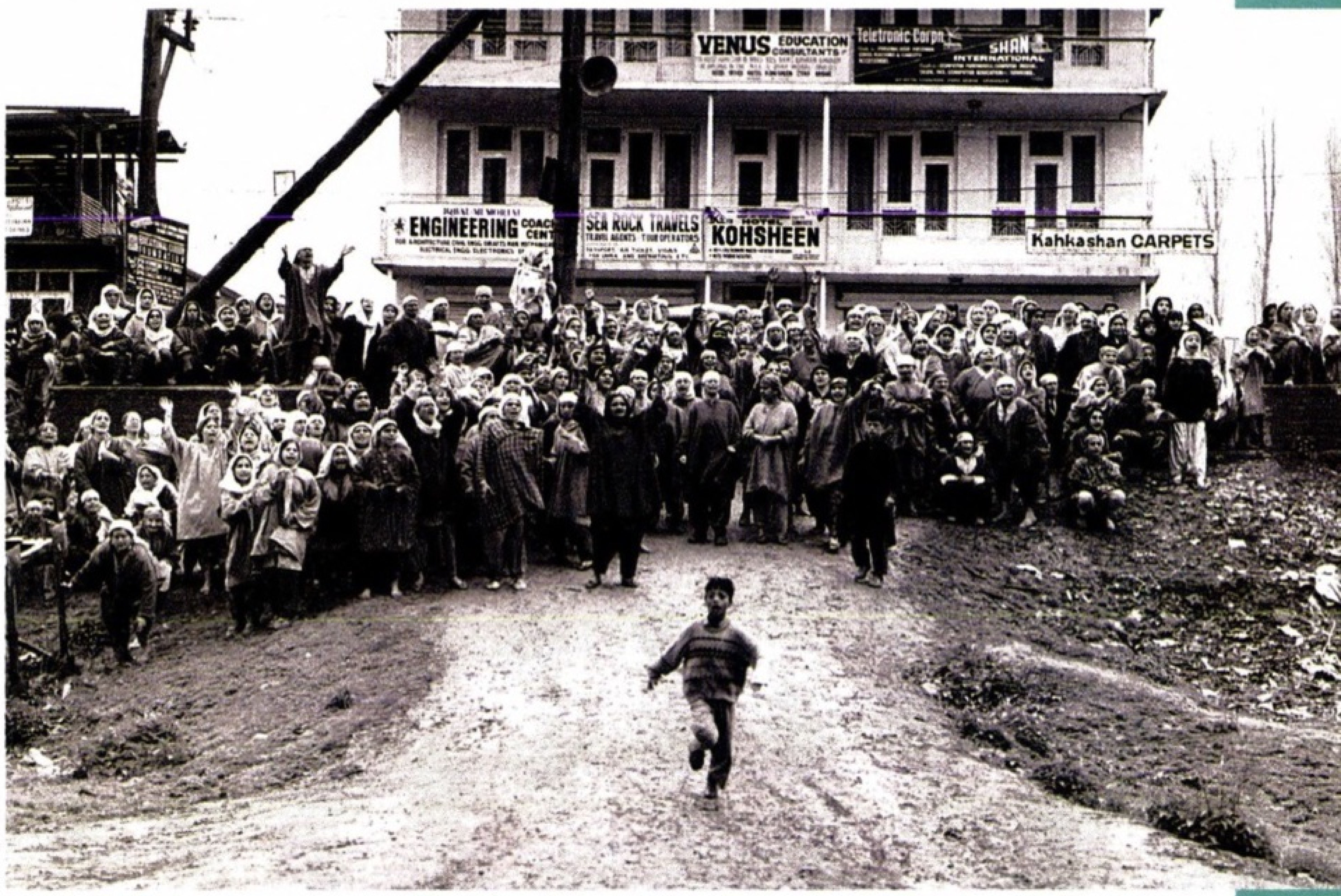
GERMANY is the Lonely Hearts capital of Europe with 12 million single Germans in search of a partner. Lonely Hearts adverts spill out of almost every newspaper and magazine at a rate of an estimated 100,000 a week. And that does not include all the radio and television spots and e-mail messages. Lonely Hearts parties organized by the group *Fisch sucht Fahrrad* (Fish seeks bicycle – from the feminist joke that a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle) are taking place across the country, drawing over 1,000 single people each time. They may be on the right track. A survey by German magazine *Bunte* has found that single women report higher levels of ill-health than women in stable relationships – with the perhaps obvious exceptions of insomnia and backache. ■

Petar Hadji-Ristic/Gemini

Complaints – Women aged 25 to 50

	headache	stomach-ache	nausea	insomnia	flatulence	backache	colds	heartburn	toothache	hiccups
% singles	**53**	**22**	**17**	**20**	**13**	**38**	**34**	**12**	**9**	**14**
% in a stable relationship	**35**	**9**	**5**	**40**	**6**	**47**	**20**	**7**	**5**	**6**

KASHMIR


KASH

Women take to the streets.

A greengrocer in Srinagar was spotted by an Indian Army patrol 10 metres from his house just 20 minutes after the start of curfew – he was outside because his house has no toilet. Just before sunrise the following day his battered and tortured corpse was found dumped in front of his house. Permission for a proper funeral was refused, so arrangements were made for burial in a local park. The women pictured here are standing at the entrance to the park to protest at the killing and to block the path of Indian soldiers who were trying to stop the ceremony. ■

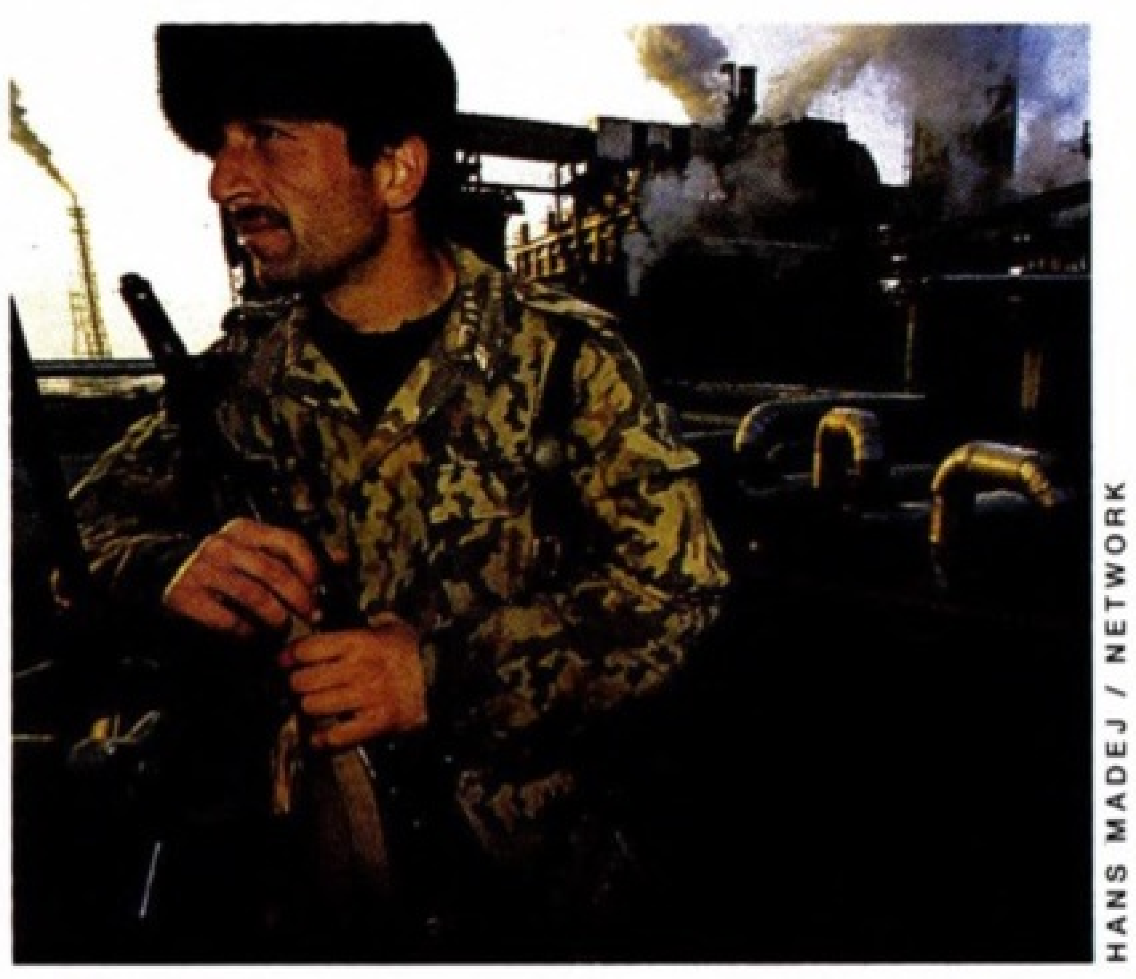
Kash

Update

CHECHNYA

Hammer and scalpel

Oil under troubled waters.



HANS MADEJ / NETWORK

Under guard: oil installations in Chechnya.

The politics of oil have been driving the conflict in Chechnya to a much greater degree than has so far been reported. More than 20 large Western oil companies have already begun work extracting oil from the Caspian Sea. About half the oil destined for export is due to pass through new or reconstructed pipelines which cross the North Caucasus via Chechnya.

The western part of the North Caucasus region is Russia's main agricultural centre and is supplied by petrol and diesel from oil refineries in Grozny, the Chechen capital. The railway line through Grozny links the North Caucasus to the Urals and Siberia. The main oil pipeline between Baku, Makhachkala and Tuapse, as well as the local pipelines for the south-eastern regions of Astrakhan, also pass through Grozny.

Its key position in the transport system explains why economic sanctions could not be used against Chechnya to achieve a compromise settlement – the Chechens simply took what they needed from the goods that crossed their country. President Dudayev threatened to blow up existing pipelines (not to mention nuclear power plants) should Russia launch an attack. The hurried Russian military occupation was a response to the stopping of all railway traffic through the region.

This showed how vulnerable any new oil pipeline would be. Turkey's recent decision to ban the passage of large oil tankers through the Bosphorus has made export through the Black Sea unviable. Kazakhstan, Turkmenia and Azerbaijan have all, as a consequence, been discussing the possibility of pipelines through Turkey and Iran. Alarm at this prospect, which would weaken Russian control over oil supplies, was another factor that made Russia resort to extreme measures in Chechnya.

An alternative plan for a pipeline through Bulgaria and Greece, by-passing Turkey altogether, was agreed by Russia in October 1994. Russian influence over Caspian oil, however, depends upon a guarantee that the transport lines crossing Chechnya will operate normally – a relatively simple task until a hammer was used to undertake an operation that required a scalpel.

Zhores Medvedev

Revived

Obsolete computers – and they become obsolete every three years in the West – are a big garbage problem. In Britain alone around six million items of electronic equipment with a reclaimed value of $75 million are buried each year. Resources lost include high-quality plastics, tin, copper and aluminium in addition to precious metals such as nickel, palladium, silver and gold.

Now R Frazier Ltd, a company based in Dumfries, Scotland, run by former IBM director Liam McKenna, is specializing in reclaiming and re-selling redundant computer and electronic equipment to countries in the South with a need for entry-level technology. 'We collect redundant equipment from a variety of sources, then repair and rebuild complete systems, taking a processing chip from one, a monitor from another and so on, creating a working system from several unsaleable ones.' When equipment does not contain working components, metal and plastic are reclaimed, resulting in less than five per cent of the equipment being consigned to the landfill.

Source: People & the Planet Vol 4 No 1

The cost of dying

The UN offers proof – if it were needed – that the value of a life is open to interpretation. The UN currently pays $85,300 as compensation for the death of a soldier on a peacekeeping mission if the soldier is from an industrialized country. Soldiers from the 'developing' world, however, are valued at $19,500.

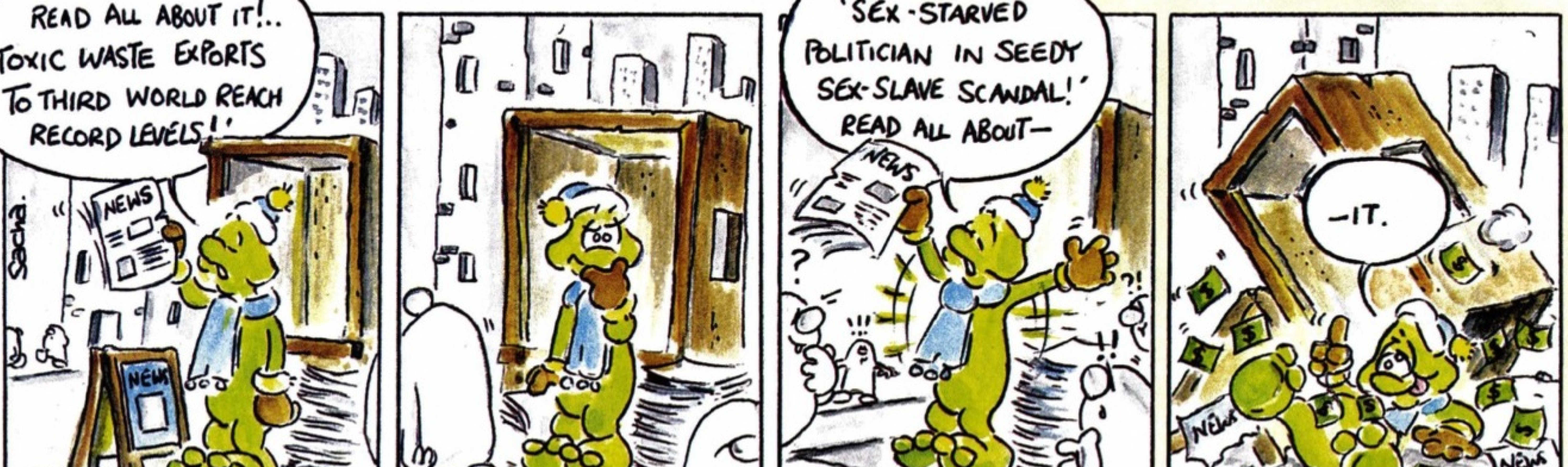
Source: Peace Matters No 8

Quote

"Silence is also death. If you speak, you die. If you keep quiet, you die. So speak out and die."

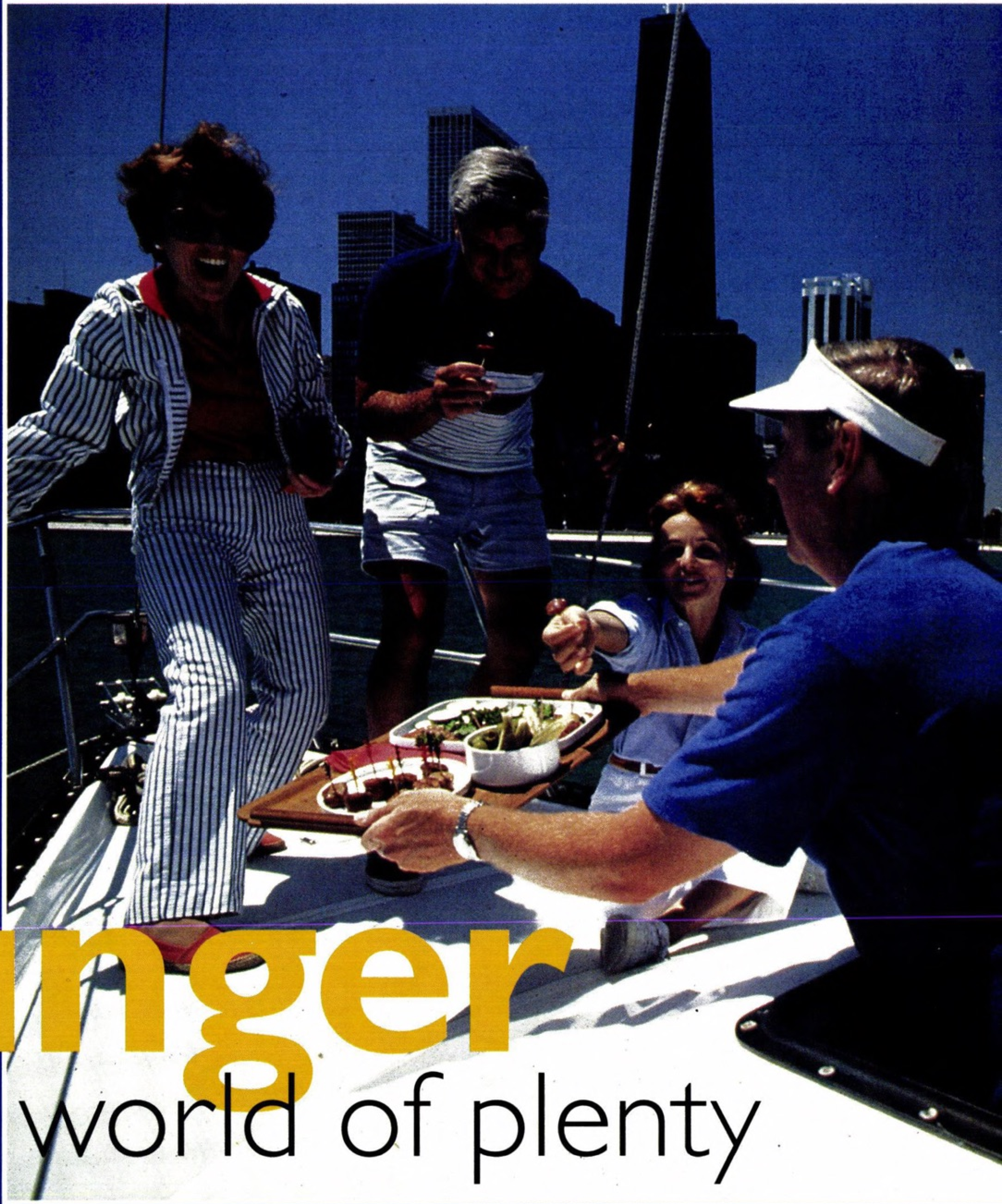
Tahar Jaout, Algerian poet shot dead in May 1993.

Chlorophyll by Sacha


READ ALL ABOUT IT!.. 'TOXIC WASTE EXPORTS TO THIRD WORLD REACH RECORD LEVELS!'
NEWS
Sacha
NEWS
'SEX-STARVED POLITICIAN IN SEEDY SEX-SLAVE SCANDAL!' READ ALL ABOUT—
NEWS
—IT.
NEWS
NEWS

Wealth, not scarcity, makes people hungry. **Dinyar Godrej** explains why pushing the 'free' market as a panacea is like prescribing pneumonia for a cold.

Hunger in a world of plenty



IAN BERRY / MAGNUM

A LIGHT came wobbling up the Banbury Road, Oxford, in the dead of night. It stopped near a garbage bin and an elderly figure dismounted from an equally elderly bicycle. It was a man, slim and upright, if a little tremulous, dressed in faded but impeccably pressed clothes, a clip on his right ankle to guard the indeterminate grey of the trouser leg against any chance encounter with bike grease.

First he looked up and down the road. Then, very carefully, he extricated a neatly folded plastic carrier bag from a pocket and set about methodically searching through the contents of the bin. From amongst the day's detritus he picked up some half-eaten items, inspected them for decay, then placed them in his carrier bag. In a few minutes he was through and set off in the direction of Summertown, wobbling to a stop from time to time.

All of North Oxford seemed to be asleep, every locked house silent, and I knew I had witnessed a routine which was meant to be invisible. I couldn't help but feel that had it happened in broad daylight in front of curious passers-by it would have been just as dignified.

In my mind this memory dovetails with a much older one from when I was a child living in my family home in Indore – a city in India's Deccan heartland which has grown pell-mell around industry's magnet.

One day a very old and skeletal man wearing only a loincloth came and sat down by the potted cactus at the end of our drive. Unlike other alms-seekers he sat silently until my mother noticed him – there was no telling how long he had been there. He was immediately given some money which he took with the kind of abundant gratitude that puts the giver to shame.

He returned once a week, every week, more emaciated each time. He weighed heavy on our conscience – watching the bones straining through his skin with every movement he made was a lesson in anatomy and ethics rolled into one.

We became more watchful, looking out several times a day to see if he was there. He was persuaded to come round to the back of the house and sit in the shade. My mother took to giving him larger sums of money, and food which he would take away to eat elsewhere. He was nearly blind and had to be told the value of the coins. We all feared that in reality it made little difference because he would probably be cheated anyway. We asked him to come around more often, but he had his own code of honour and would only visit once a week.

Eventually he stopped coming and then we knew he was dead. To be honest it was a relief not to have to watch the skin hang from him or his slow, angular, careful walk.

In Indian folklore the gods often come down to earth to test human beings. We felt as though we had been through such a test but couldn't say whether we had passed it or not.

Making Martians

Increasingly sophisticated lifestyles often distort our relationship with food: we are even able to forget that its basic purpose – apart from the obvious pleasure it gives – is to keep us going. Another person's hunger is a reminder that there is something as simple as eating to live. Yet nowhere are people guaranteed a right to food. If the presence of hunger is an affront to our notions of justice, then it is doubly unjust that those who have the least power – the elderly, women and their dependent children, refugees, the disabled – are the most likely to go hungry.

The shame of hunger is a double shame – it burns the hungry with the brand of humiliation, despair and dependency and it burns us with guilt and a feeling of powerlessness at being unable to help. For the hungry it can mean being reduced to surrendering the dignity that attends being able to provide for oneself. Sometimes this can be perceived oddly – as though the hungry had no dignity to lose, as though they had no emotions to expend, as though they were ciphers filled only by need, as though they were Martians.

The wealthy often go into denial – putting up walls around their homes, sending their kids to private schools, policing their malls, making sure that the poor are 'elsewhere'. This distance is essential to making Martians of the poor – they are completely alien, they have no connection with us, they are illegal immigrants to our neighbourhood or our nation, they are a problem. An aunt of mine once suggested that poor people should be taken out at the dead of night and shot – such 'cleaning-up' happens for real in some parts of the world.

Today it is estimated there are nearly 800 million people who don't have enough to eat – 12 million die of hunger every year. Two billion have vitamin and mineral deficiencies in their diets which can cause serious health problems.[1,2]

Hidden war

There's a war going on and we hardly hear of it. The news media chases famine, hooked onto a perverse aesthetics of death. People with chronic, everyday hunger, who work and go about their business with a hole inside, aren't quite sexy enough. Famines have the 'advantage' of being dramatic, of coming and going, of being, in retrospect, controllable. The hungry, on the other hand, are always with us.

And yet there is no reason why this should be so – more than enough food is produced in our world to feed everyone. What is more, estimates of food supply are usually based on grain production alone and don't include vegetables, milk and meat. To invoke this surplus is not just globaloney sung to the tune of 'There are people starving in China [what my mother always told me] so eat your food'. It is not even to argue that countries with surpluses should 'give' other countries their food. In the majority of countries the surpluses exist within the country; it's just that poor people have no means to buy the food. The reallocation of less than 10 per cent of India's food supply would feed its hungry population,

Poverty and the photographer: hunger caused by war in Sudan makes the news pages.

CRISPIN HUGHES / PANOS

which is the largest among all countries. The food waits instead for the right price or a foreign buyer.

Hunger is not due to scarcity; it is created by wealth. The wealthiest fifth of the population, living mainly in industrialized countries, controls 85 per cent of global income, whilst the poorest fifth lives off a mere 1.4 per cent.[1] Britain's richest 10 people have as much wealth as 23 poor countries with over 174 million people.[3] Statistics like that don't just happen; they reflect theft on a vast scale. Mahatma Gandhi pointed out that since the wealth of a country like Britain was founded on the plunder of nearly half the world's resources we would need several worlds to bring such prosperity to everyone. What we are seeing is an unprecedented polarization of wealth – fewer people are getting hold of more and more and they seem to care less and less about the consequences.

J.C. LABBE / FRANK SPOONER

BURT GLINN / MAGNUM

Whose is the future: These Vietnamese women and their hand-reared crop? Or the industrial farmer with his big toys?

With money-economies firmly in place the wealthy can pull markets in whichever direction they like. Something as basic as food production is completely skewed by the demands of wealth. Industrial countries contain 24 per cent of the world's population, but they manage to use 48 per cent of the world's grain and 61 per cent of its meat.[4] In fact they stuff quite a lot of this grain into what will become the meat. Their consumption of non-food resources is even higher. Leftover money is always available for the little luxuries of life – US citizens spent $30 billion on jewellery and watches in 1991, a sum equivalent to the entire Gross Domestic Product of 20 low-income countries.[1]

None of this would matter so much if rich countries were self-sufficient themselves – but they aren't. They corner resources through the sheer power of money, and they turn the rest of the world into beggars at the feast. The simplicity and the cruelty with which this is done is worth exploring.

Peddling the market

Colonialism turned the majority of the world's people into resource providers. The trade advantage thus gained was maintained even after subject countries got their independence. Then along came the Gulf's oil boom and Western banks found themselves flooded with investments from oil-rich sheikhs. They peddled this money unscrupulously to governments in the Majority World. Poor countries took up loans in the 1970s because prices for the raw materials they sold were rising at the time and they thought they might get a foot in the door of the rich club. Commodity prices fell, interest rates soared and in some cases a Mobutu or a Marcos pocketed billions of dollars. The Third World Debt had come to stay. The amount paid off as interest by poor countries has already exceeded the original sums of money borrowed, yet they are still in debt. In 1993, for every dollar given in aid rich nations took back three in debt repayments.

The marketplace is now being pushed as the panacea for countries with problems feeding their populations, which is a bit like prescribing pneumonia for a cold. The IMF and World Bank give loans on condition that poor countries work towards increasing their exports to pay off debt. So already-glutted and recession-hit Western markets get more of the same things – more cocoa, more coffee, more bananas – from producers in the Majority World who are forced into competition with each other. Prices drop as fast as production rises.

Straddling markets from Djibouti to Detroit is the relatively recent colossus of the transnational corporation, funnelling produce from farmers worldwide, shipping it hither and yon, playing with it for profit. In 1989 transnationals controlled 70 per cent of international trade and 80 per cent of all the land growing export crops. They employed just three per cent of the world's paid labour.[5] Profits – and they are huge – go mainly to a handful of owners.

This, then, is the so-called 'free market' – a place where wealthy governments and big business give poor producers the freedom to sell their labour and goods at the lowest possible prices. In another age it went by another name – slavery.

Rich countries dictate terms to poor countries, protecting their own produce with subsidies, imposing tariffs and squeezing the lowest prices for raw materials. They don't feel a similar need to protect their markets from each other.

Milking the beast

The strangest thing about the market is that the movers and shakers have tremendous influence but little control. They are milking the beast for all its worth today. That it may kick the pail tomorrow is something they'd rather not think about.

France's President Mitterand put his finger on it at the recent UN Social Summit, where world leaders agreed to disagree over the steps to be taken to combat poverty. 'Are we really going to let the world become a global market without any rules other than those of the jungle and with no purpose other than maximum gain, maximum profit, in the minimum time?' he asked.[6]

The market mentality is striking at the very heart of food production – the farmers. In the West it has imposed an unsustainable and heavily-polluting commercial agriculture that uses 10 calories of energy for every calorie of food it produces. This very expensive food is made cheap for urban consumers by subsidies, which have come from their taxes anyway. The huge surpluses farmers in the West produce are then dumped in the South either as food aid or at ridiculously low prices which often destroy local farmers in the process. Increasingly this high-cost agriculture has edged out smaller producers and has led to the present indebtedness of many a US farmer.

In the Majority World the Green Revolution got hijacked by the élites who could afford it and starved large numbers of small farmers who couldn't. Cash cropping took hold, uprooting a diversity of food crops, driving those who couldn't hack it into urban centres to look for jobs.

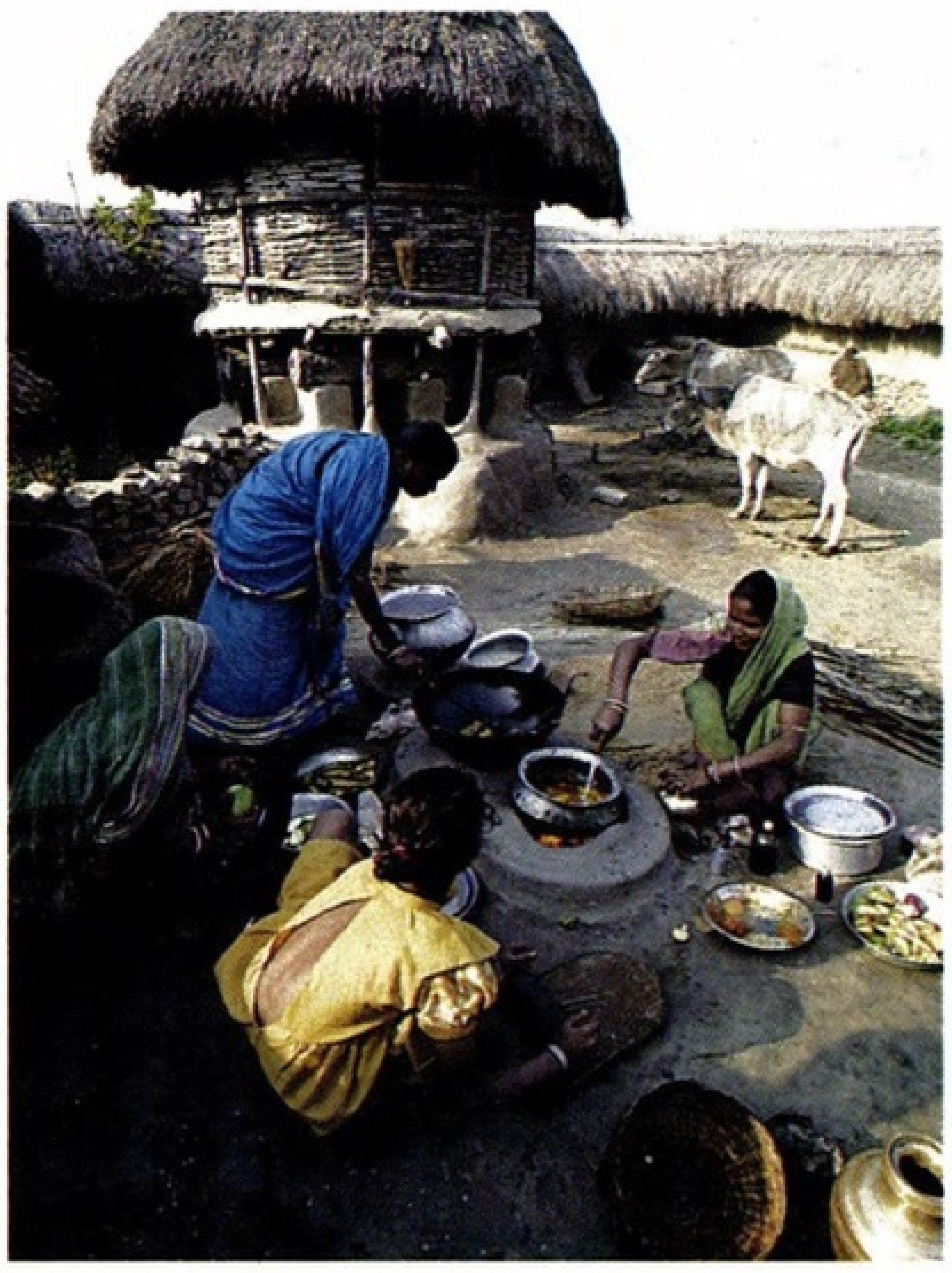
This is a tremendous diminishment of human resources. People who could provide for themselves become hungry and landless. Farmers find decisions about what they grow and how they grow it being taken by forces beyond their control and not in their best interests. Consumers too find they are at the mercy of the merchants, that they count not as people but as customers.

Resistance

The resistance is about rescuing the control of food from this market machine. Poor people around the world are bypassing the system with communal efforts at growing and sharing food.

In India farmers are successfully resisting the transnationals' efforts to control their seeds. All across Latin America peasant farmers are getting together under a movement called *Campesino a Campesino* to share their knowledge and to work towards growing more food. In Bolivia women have taken to the streets protesting against US food 'aid' which has crippled local wheat production. In Zambia farmers are rediscovering the diversity of traditional foodgrains like sorghum and millet; mills are opening in rural areas, loosening urban control over the finished product.

Change is coming to the rich world, too. In Japan the Sekatsu consumer network has directly linked up with banana growers in the Philippines, getting a better deal for all parties concerned. Farmers in France are working with their Brazilian counterparts to find ways of foregoing the use of Brazilian grain as animal feed. Fair-trade movements have made a start at getting better prices for coffee and cocoa producers, proving that cash crops needn't necessarily cause hunger.


NANCY DURRELL McKENNA / PANOS

Breakfast in Bengal: village women manage an economy of food.

This is the kind of resistance which could safeguard our food in the future, and we tell some of the stories in this issue. However, the crisis that looms over the market minefield is not just one of deepening poverty but of ultimate environmental collapse. The world's relatively small wealthy population is probably getting too large to sustain. This is the population whose demand occupies swathes of rich farmland and makes it grow strawberries, flowers and animal feed, forcing hungry farmers into marginal, erosion-prone areas. This is the population which ultimately endorses the poisoning of our environment and the exhaustion of every exhaustible resource.

All the realistic alternatives involve making choice available to more, rather than fewer, people and doing so before environmental imperatives dictate their own terms. Hunger is, in this sense, a question of democracy and democratic control. At present the most 'democratic' nations of the world are involved in the most widespread massacre of human rights – the perpetuation of hunger.

The globe, we are told, is shrinking. Perhaps it has not yet shrunk enough for the rich to see that they inhabit the same planet as the poor. There is no neat boundary between the world of wealth and the world from which the wealth comes. To make two worlds out of one is, quite literally, to tear it apart. ■

Action

Resistance is already here – it is usually local and around specific issues, but its impact can set off a sequence of positive changes. Each article in this issue is followed by ideas for action.

One option is to use our consumer power carefully by supporting the produce of local farmers which is more likely to be in the local grocery shop than in a supermarket. We can support green produce and fairly traded goods.

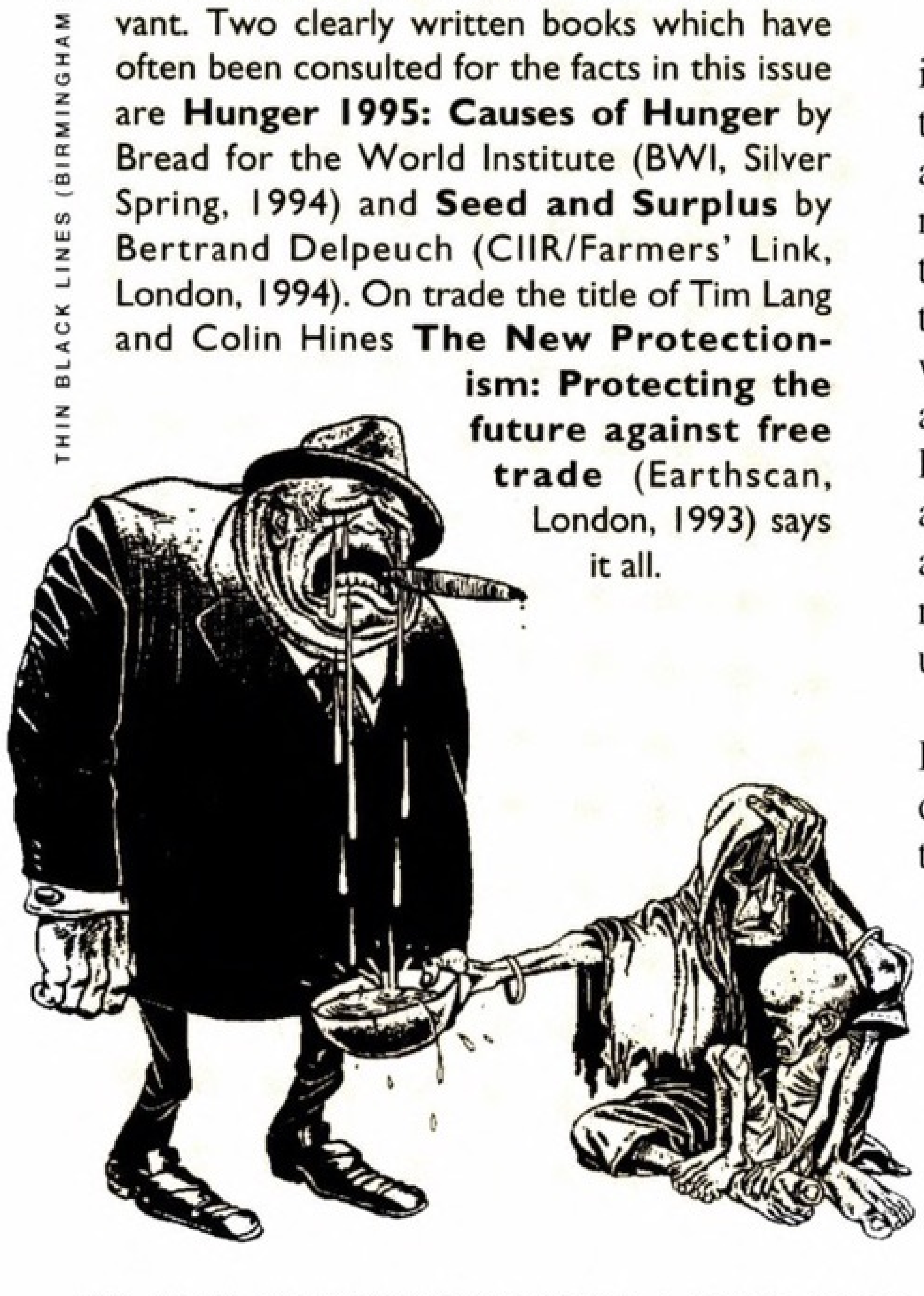
Another is to reduce our consumption of meat. The world is overpopulated with artificially high numbers of farm animals, resulting in deforestation both in the West and the Majority World. Meat production in the West uses grain which many poor people are unable to buy.

Major non-governmental organizations (NGOs) benefit a host of local projects which have an impact – whether direct or indirect – on reducing hunger. They need your support and can be a useful source of information.

Finally, you will find little mention of food aid in this issue. This is because such aid has usually been inappropriate, creating dependency and disrupting local food production. It would be much better if food aid for a country in need could be purchased from a neighbouring country which has a surplus rather than being transported halfway around the world. Other forms of aid need to be tailored to countries' needs rather than being used for political expedience.

Worth reading

One of the more accessible books is **World Hunger: 12 Myths** by Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins (Earthscan, London, 1988). Although much of the information in this classic is dated, its argument remains, on the whole, straightforward, persuasive and relevant. Two clearly written books which have often been consulted for the facts in this issue are **Hunger 1995: Causes of Hunger** by Bread for the World Institute (BWI, Silver Spring, 1994) and **Seed and Surplus** by Bertrand Delpeuch (CIIR/Farmers' Link, London, 1994). On trade the title of Tim Lang and Colin Hines **The New Protectionism: Protecting the future against free trade** (Earthscan, London, 1993) says it all.


THIN BLACK LINES (BIRMINGHAM DEC, 1988)

---

[1] Bread for the World Institute, *Hunger 1995: Causes of Hunger*, Silver Spring, 1994. [2] Bertrand Delpeuch, *Seed and Surplus*, CIIR/Farmers' Link, London, 1994. [3] World Development Movement. [4] Tim Lang and Colin Hines, *The New Protectionism*, Earthscan, London, 1993. [5] The International Coalition for Development Action (ICDA), *An Alternative Report on Trade*, Brussels, 1995. [6] The Guardian, 13 March 1995.

Bread

The spoon was walking, full, off the table
to reach the poor and all their Sundays,
all their lost mornings came rushing back
hungry as the lion's eyes; the table was moving
toward the centre, breaking its legs
and all their journeys came inward to their stomachs
reeking of this great forest's hunger
the loaf was walking out of the oven announcing
its magic yeast and the mouths of the poor
began to shake trying to catch the taste of its smoke

O bread that walked away from its smoke
only to deny that other smoke that sat
on the flat of the lip, begging for the broth
of the frog to warm the frost-bitten mouths
O soles so rich in holes from biting hard on the flesh
of the leather as if the journeys had led somewhere
looking at these soles it would have been nice
to keep for once the grain that they produced
to bake their own bread it would have been nice
to drink for once the milk from their cow
before they confiscated it from them
be nice, sitting up all night, unable to breathe
because of that asthmatic seizure, to smoke a rare leaf
be nice not to have been the man I have been!
but who can choose one's own spoon
to eat at a round table to one's heart's desire
embroidered lace and all, the hearth at full glow
warming these rheumatic joints, a nice contemplation
of a beloved woman the song of Orpheus
eyeing at the end of the tunnel the mouth of the muse
calming this heart that sits on the palm of my desire
but having looked back and lost it all
when the spoon rolls off the table with its tomorrow
when the oven announces its fresh bread at a price
denied the multitude, denied my pocket I ask only
that when they hope for it begging on their knees
give them this bread, this universal gift!

SYL CHENEY-COKER
from THE BLOOD IN THE DESERT'S EYES (Heinemann)

ILLUSTRATION BY YOLANDA CHRISTIAN

Fields of memory

Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher has a surprise when he returns to his village in Ethiopia. A region of rats, hares and squirrels has started to provide for its people.

NEIL COOPER / PANOS PICTURES

Digging deep: years of experience bring food where once there was famine.

My village is on a dolomite plateau in the shadow of the volcanic Mount Mariam Fo, in the Tigray region of North Ethiopia. Tigray became notorious in 1974 and 1985 for being very short of food.

One of my earliest memories as a child of this harsh landscape is of isolated, big acacia trees and silt-laden floods at the beginning of the rainy season. When I visited my village in 1972, 11 years after leaving it, all the trees had gone. Slabs of white stone had replaced them.

I went back recently expecting worse desolation. Surprisingly I saw more trees there than when I was a boy. I started asking questions. Our parish head-priest is the Reverend Tsegay, an older cousin and my godfather. He recounted all that he knew from the tales of his father and uncles, and elders before them.

'Do you see the walls of my house?' he began – some of the stones had been blackened by fire. 'My house was burnt and rebuilt three times during the civil war.'

'Do you remember Reverend Gebru? He became blind in his old age. One afternoon, the soldiers came. The able-bodied ran away but Reverend Gebru was burnt alive in his house. We lost people, harvests, livestock. But life goes on, and our children can rebuild all over again.

'When the Government soldiers were driven away for good, we were free. We had long discussions on how to improve our situation. First we shared the land according to family size. We all got shares on the harsh plateau and much smaller shares on the better valley soil. We developed our own rules to protect trees. For firewood now we only take branches.'

'What about food?' I asked. 'Do you produce enough to eat?'

'Some do and some don't,' he answered. 'The plateau to the east of us has better soils, so the people are more self-sufficient. The highlands to the north are also fertile. Combining our labour and the goodness of the land, we can feed ourselves and others. We need to debate among ourselves to decide how we can all co-operate.'

'Why have people been hungry?' I persisted.

'Because of our sins,' he said. 'We sinned and brought civil war on ourselves. War disrupts everything. A farmer cannot give year-round attention to the land. Livestock die, and the land cannot be tilled without oxen. Without manure the land cannot give us enough food. Farmers need continued peace to protect their land with terraces. Without terraces, the soil gets washed away.'

'But all these problems were there when I was a boy, and there was no civil war then.'

'You are right. As our grandfather told me, there used to be community elders who decided on cutting down trees, hunting animals and other matters. Then the emperors of Addis Ababa appointed outsiders to rule us. Wanting only our produce, they were not interested in helping us manage our land. Then came the Italians and their young *bandas* [Ethiopians serving in the Italian army and administration] who loved shooting at anything that moved. Now, even after 40 years, we only have rats, hares and squirrels left. In Haile Selassie's time what remained of the community elders' authority was destroyed. The more selfish in our communities then set about ravaging the environment. But, at last, we have a chance to reverse it all.'

'How?' I asked.

'Look! Do you see the terraces on the slope across the valley? Our neighbouring village built them and their crops grow better because more water enters the soil. Each dry season, every able-bodied person joins in communal terracing programmes. Eventually we will terrace the slopes of Mount Mariam Fo. The valley will look as it did when you were a boy. We have lost some soil, but what is left is deep and enough to bring the valley back to wholeness.'

'Have you used chemical fertilizers?' I asked.

'Yes, in the valley. But then valley soil is good to begin with. In shallow soils the chemicals burn our crops and leave us without food and deep in debt. We are not keen on them. But we are in a quandary. We do not have enough animals to produce the manure we need and there is not enough pasture for more animals. The grazing area is shrinking because there are too many of us and we need to plough more land for crops.'

Weizero Amete is 62 and lives in a neighbouring village. She agreed that there were too many people in the area. I tried to explain that women could be helped not to get pregnant and asked if they would accept such help. 'It would be a godsend,' she said. 'They would not age before their time as I have done.'

'How about their husbands?' I asked.

'Our daughters fought as freedom fighters, as equals to men. Our men no longer order us about as they used to.'

It was the middle of the rainy season. There was a thick growth of wild chickpea flowering and fruiting in the black soil.

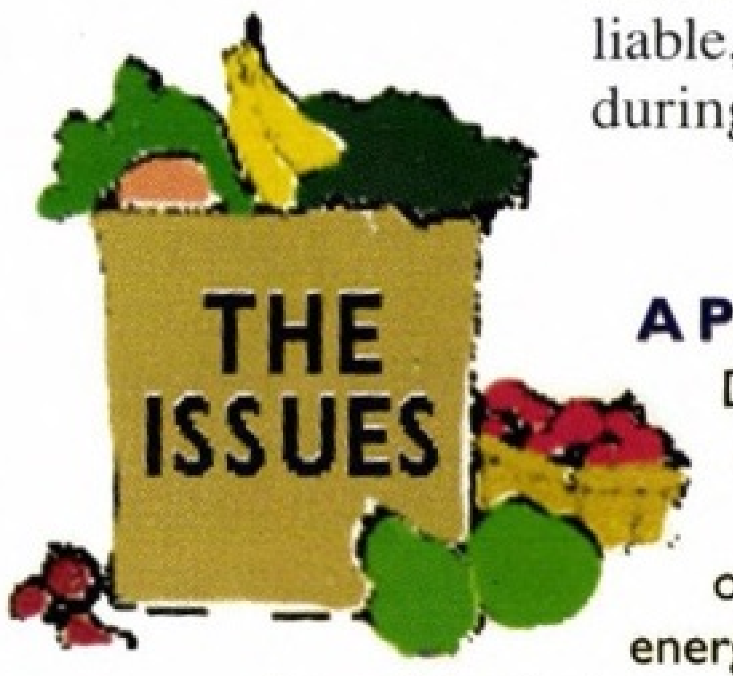
'We call it "rat chickpea" and know that it breeds with the main crop,' said Reverend Tsegay. 'In the old days we planted chickpea on deep, rich soil at the end of the rainy season so it would grow on the remaining moisture. When rains are good, we still do this. But when the rains look unreliable, we plant it on poor soil during the season. Barley is another crop we plant when we expect poor rains. Wheat needs good rains. When we dare not guess, we plant a mixture of both.'

Finally I asked: 'When you had to run for dear life from war and famine, even as far as the Sudan, did you lose your seed?'

'The careless and the lazy had problems to get seed after they returned. But for most of us, no matter what calamity befalls, we bury seed in pots in sheltered places. When we return we dig them out.'

The affluent world, through the IMF and the World Bank, has imposed structural adjustment on Ethiopia, and claims that it is a success. Thanks to creative small-scale farmers on marginal lands, and their counterparts on the more reliably-watered areas of Ethiopia, production has improved briskly now there is peace. It does not matter that the credit goes to Government economists and to the IMF. But it will matter if the Government and the rich nations of the world offer farmers no help. ■

Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher is the son of a peasant-farmer priest from Tigray. He is a plant ecologist working on the National Herbarium at Addis Ababa University.



APPROPRIATE AGRICULTURE

Despite conditions of great scarcity in Tigray, farmers have no shortage of expertise and ideas about what kinds of farming are best for their environment.

Western commercial agriculture is unsuitable for most countries and poor ones in particular. For its high yields it demands huge amounts of capital and energy – sophisticated farm equipment, large doses of fertilizers and pesticides. Every kilo of wheat grown in the US uses 2,000 litres of water. In many parts of Europe both ground and surface water are polluted by farm chemicals and waste. Meanwhile crop yields are tailing off, pests are growing resistant to pesticides and the costs of water and soil treatment are increasing.

This does not have to mean a naive 'return to nature'. In many poor countries traditional ways of farming can be vastly improved by appropriate – and small – inputs of new technology. But 'appropriate' is the key word.

Rapid population growth, wars and drought are extra factors in sub-Saharan Africa's food crisis. Over half the population is too poor to buy food even when it is available. A good part of the blame lies with the West's continued global domination.

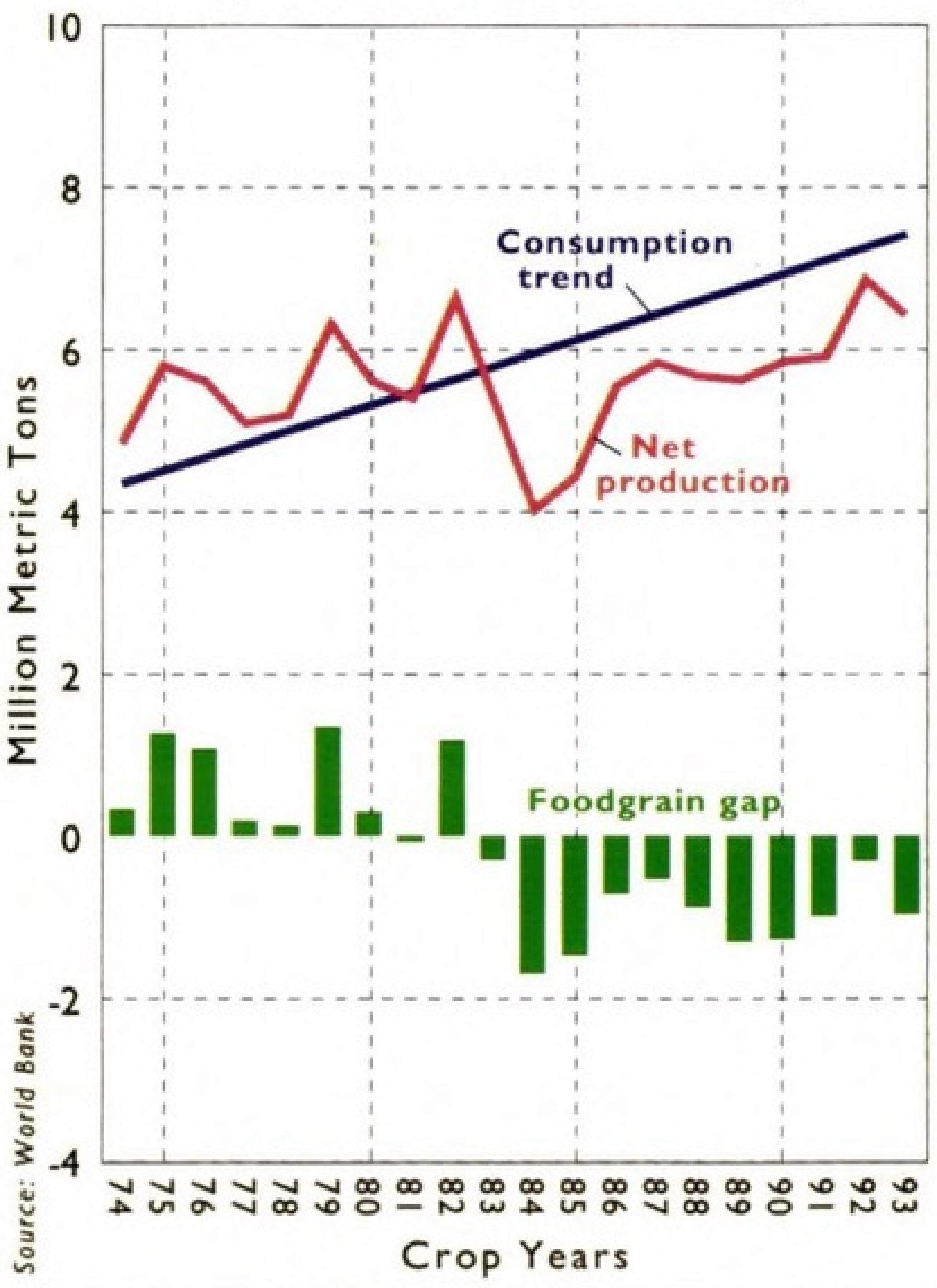
Working for change

All over the world farmers' groups and projects to aid them are actively looking at ways to tailor traditional methods to present-day conditions. In Tigray farmers are being supported by:

Tigray Conservation Project
FARM-Africa
PO Box 5746, Addis Ababa
Tel: (+) 2511 161016 Fax: (+) 2511 652566
SOS Sahel
PO Box 3262, Addis Ababa

FARM-Africa can be contacted in the UK on (+)171 430 0440. SOS Sahel has a UK office at 1 Tolpuddle Street, London N1 0XT. Tel: (+)171 837 9129.

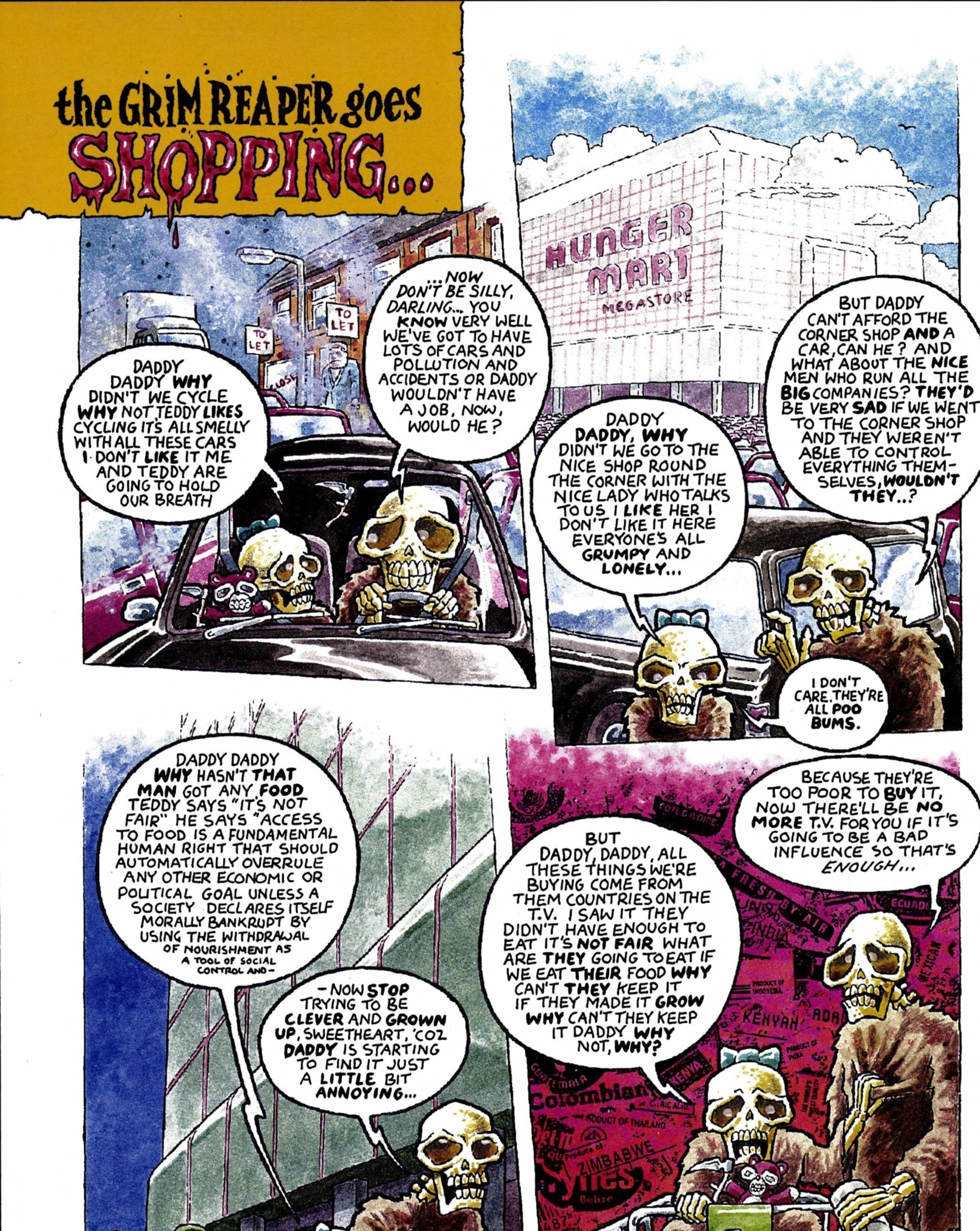
ETHIOPIA – FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION & CONSUMPTION TRENDS
(CEREALS & PULSES)

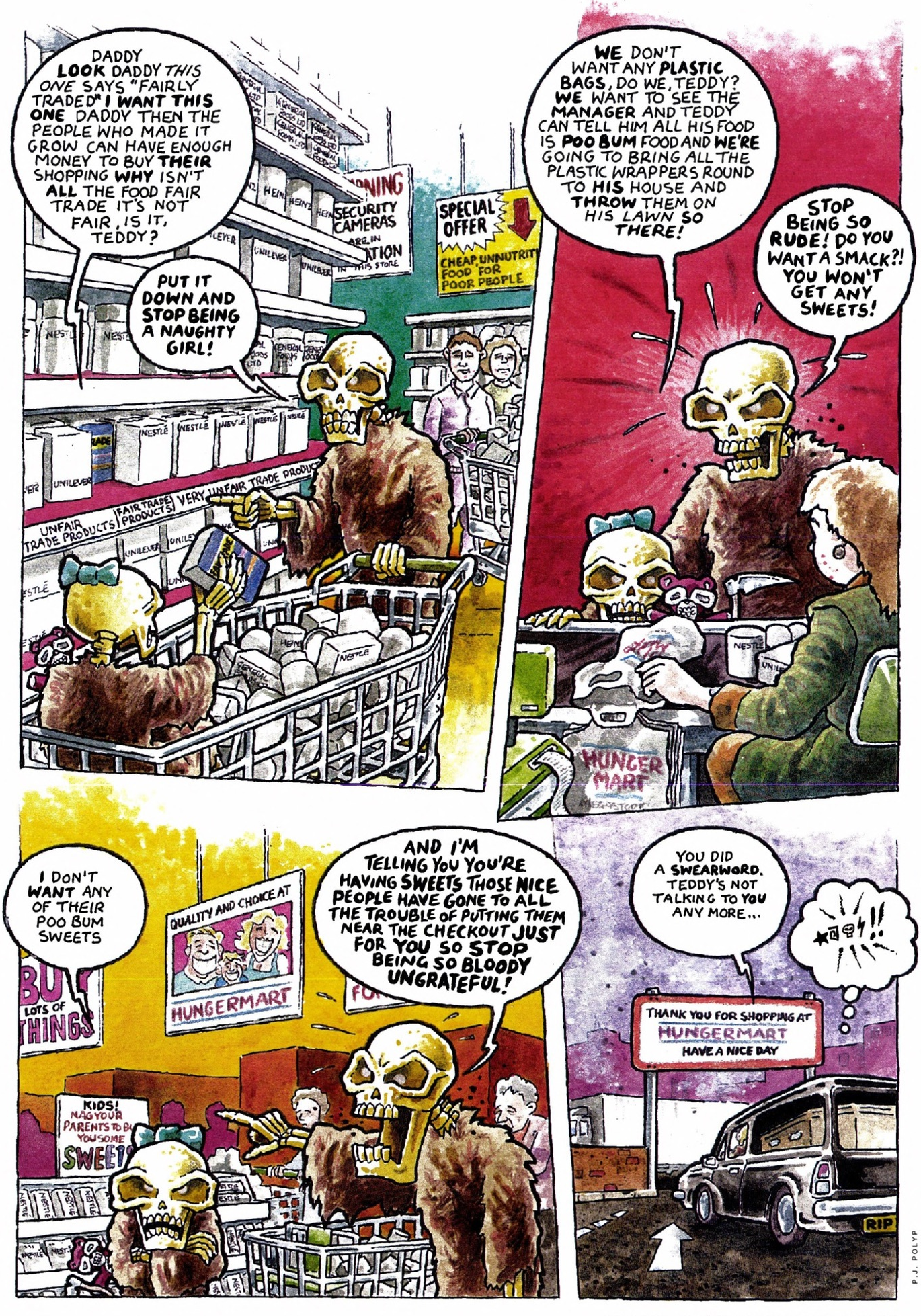


Source: World Bank

The food gap: war, population growth and inappropriate methods have turned surplus into deficit.

the GRIM REAPER goes SHOPPING...


TO LET
TO LET
DADDY DADDY **WHY** DIDN'T WE CYCLE **WHY** NOT TEDDY **LIKES** CYCLING IT'S ALL SMELLY WITH ALL THESE CARS **I** DON'T **LIKE** IT ME AND TEDDY ARE GOING TO HOLD OUR BREATH
...NOW DON'T BE SILLY, DARLING... YOU **KNOW** VERY WELL WE'VE GOT TO HAVE LOTS OF CARS AND POLLUTION AND ACCIDENTS OR DADDY WOULDN'T HAVE A JOB, NOW, WOULD HE?
HUNGER MART MEGASTORE
DADDY **DADDY, WHY** DIDN'T WE GO TO THE NICE SHOP ROUND THE CORNER WITH THE NICE LADY WHO TALKS TO US I **LIKE** HER I DON'T LIKE IT HERE EVERYONE'S ALL **GRUMPY** AND **LONELY...**
BUT DADDY CAN'T AFFORD THE CORNER SHOP **AND** A CAR, CAN HE? AND WHAT ABOUT THE **NICE** MEN WHO RUN ALL THE **BIG** COMPANIES? **THEY'D** BE VERY **SAD** IF WE WENT TO THE CORNER SHOP AND THEY WEREN'T ABLE TO CONTROL EVERYTHING THEMSELVES, **WOULDN'T THEY..?**
I DON'T CARE. THEY'RE ALL **POO BUMS**.
DADDY DADDY **WHY** HASN'T **THAT MAN** GOT ANY **FOOD** TEDDY SAYS "IT'S NOT FAIR" HE SAYS "ACCESS TO FOOD IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT THAT SHOULD AUTOMATICALLY OVERRULE ANY OTHER ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL GOAL UNLESS A SOCIETY DECLARES ITSELF MORALLY BANKRUPT BY USING THE WITHDRAWAL OF NOURISHMENT AS A TOOL OF SOCIAL CONTROL AND–
–NOW **STOP** TRYING TO BE **CLEVER** AND **GROWN UP**, SWEETHEART, 'COZ **DADDY** IS STARTING TO FIND IT JUST A **LITTLE** BIT **ANNOYING...**
WILL WORK FOR FOOD
BUT DADDY, DADDY, ALL THESE THINGS WE'RE BUYING COME FROM THEM COUNTRIES ON THE T.V. I SAW IT THEY DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT IT'S **NOT FAIR** WHAT ARE **THEY** GOING TO EAT IF WE EAT **THEIR** FOOD **WHY** CAN'T **THEY** KEEP IT IF THEY MADE IT **GROW WHY** CAN'T THEY KEEP IT DADDY **WHY** NOT, **WHY?**
BECAUSE THEY'RE TOO POOR TO **BUY** IT, NOW THERE'LL **BE NO MORE** T.V. FOR YOU IF IT'S GOING TO BE A BAD INFLUENCE SO THAT'S *ENOUGH...*
COTE D'IVOIRE
ECUADOR
INDIA
MEXICAN
PRODUCT OF INDONESIA
KENYAN
KENYA
GUATEMALA
Colombian
PRODUCT OF THAILAND
ZIMBABWE
Belize
UNILEVER
HEINZ
GENERAL FOODS LTD
NESTLE


DADDY LOOK DADDY THIS ONE SAYS "FAIRLY TRADED" I WANT THIS ONE DADDY THEN THE PEOPLE WHO MADE IT GROW CAN HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY THEIR SHOPPING WHY ISN'T ALL THE FOOD FAIR TRADE IT'S NOT FAIR, IS IT, TEDDY?
PUT IT DOWN AND STOP BEING A NAUGHTY GIRL!
NING SECURITY CAMERAS ARE IN ATION IN THIS STORE
SPECIAL OFFER CHEAP, UNNUTRIT FOOD FOR POOR PEOPLE
UNFAIR TRADE PRODUCTS
FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS
VERY UNFAIR TRADE PRODU
HEINZ
NESTLÉ
UNILEVER
GENERAL FOODS LTD
WE DON'T WANT ANY PLASTIC BAGS, DO WE, TEDDY? WE WANT TO SEE THE MANAGER AND TEDDY CAN TELL HIM ALL HIS FOOD IS POO BUM FOOD AND WE'RE GOING TO BRING ALL THE PLASTIC WRAPPERS ROUND TO HIS HOUSE AND THROW THEM ON HIS LAWN SO THERE!
STOP BEING SO RUDE! DO YOU WANT A SMACK?! YOU WON'T GET ANY SWEETS!
HUNGER MART
I DON'T WANT ANY OF THEIR POO BUM SWEETS
AND I'M TELLING YOU YOU'RE HAVING SWEETS THOSE NICE PEOPLE HAVE GONE TO ALL THE TROUBLE OF PUTTING THEM NEAR THE CHECKOUT JUST FOR YOU SO STOP BEING SO BLOODY UNGRATEFUL!
QUALITY AND CHOICE AT HUNGERMART
BU LOTS OF THINGS
KIDS! NAG YOUR PARENTS TO BU YOU SOME SWEET
YOU DID A SWEARWORD. TEDDY'S NOT TALKING TO YOU ANY MORE...
THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING AT HUNGERMART HAVE A NICE DAY
RIP

P. J. POLYP

DR SHAHIDUL ALAM / PANOS

Attack of the shrimps

As inevitably as a B-movie plot, small fry and human greed take control in Bangladesh. **Philip Gain** investigates.

BHUSHAN Chandra Roy owns a seven-acre plot of land in the coastal village of Bara Durgapur, 350 kilometres south of Dhaka. Ten years ago he grew enough rice to feed his family of eight – plus a surplus which he sold for extra cash. Now he grows only a third of that amount.

Ten years ago his farm was luxuriant with trees – bananas, betelnut, coconut and date palms. Now the banana trees are gone, the betelnut trees dead, the coconut trees sterile and the date palms dying.

His fields are flooded with brackish salt water, wherein lurk the inheritors of Bhushan's land – shrimps.

Reigning over this sunken empire of small fry is one top cat – Iqtiaruddin Bablu, a commissioner of Khulna City Corporation who has been growing shrimp on a 300-acre farm in Bhushan's area for the last 10 years. Commissioner Bablu doesn't own any of this land, nor does he live or work on it. He has leased Bhushan's seven acres for $100 a year. Last year Commissioner Bablu earned nearly six times as much for each acre he controlled, netting a cool $175,000.

There are hundreds of others like Commissioner Bablu; well-connected city folk leasing land to grow cash-crop shrimp. They have links with political bigwigs and the local administration, which is all the qualification needed to get into the business.

The local landholders, on the other hand, have no such clout, only problems. Saline water from the shrimp farms creeps into their land making it useless for traditional farming.

The farming that does go on is tremendously difficult. Bhushan can no longer rely on migratory birds to control pests, because the birds no longer come. Fish, which used to be abundantly available, are now exorbitantly expensive because the canals and rivers which used to be common property are controlled by the shrimp farmers. Some aquatic plants and animal species have become extinct. These are lean times for the poor small farmers who work marginal lands in the coastal districts. The shrimp-farming zone extends from the Sundarbans mangroves in Khulna to Cox's Bazar, the entire south-east fringe of the coastal belt.

The Government has sacrificed the fragile coastal ecosystem on the grounds that shrimp for export earn much-coveted foreign exchange, necessary for strengthening the economy. Never mind if only a handful of people benefit and great numbers are dispossessed.

The **New Internationalist** magazine – now available in **South Africa**

We are delighted to announce the launch of the **New Internationalist** magazine in South Africa. To mark the occasion we have produced this special issue and would like to thank everyone whose advice and practical support has helped make it possible, including: DIAKONIA, WEEKLY MAIL & GUARDIAN, EDA/NEW GROUND, THE BORDER RURAL COMMITTEE, WILLIAM BEINART, MIKE ETTLING, HARRIET PERLMAN/UPBEAT, HISTORY WORKSHOP, DAVE KAPLAN, GAVIN WILLIAMS, R W JOHNSON, ACTION ON SOUTHERN AFRICA, JEFF PEIRIS MP, RHODES UNIVERSITY DEPT OF JOURNALISM, NHLANHLA MAAKE, LAURIE FLYNNE, JUDITH WEYMONT/NUM.

> *'The **New Internationalist** gives a truly international perspective – so important to us sitting here on the southern tip of Africa.'*
>
> **Anton Harber**, Co-editor, The Weekly Mail & Guardian

> *'The new South Africa eagerly awaits the **New Internationalist**.'*
>
> **Dr Frene Ginwala**, Speaker, National Assembly

Special introductory prices:

☑ **Individuals/Institutions:**
As part of the launch the NI is available on subscription at the special introductory price of just R90 per year for individuals, or R150 for institutions.

☑ **Multiple subscriptions:**
Perhaps you could use more than one regular copy delivered to your address each month – for a course or group? If you order five or more copies each month, the price for each subscription is cut to only R60.

☑ **Bulk orders:**
And if you want a larger number of a particular magazine (this one on South Africa perhaps?) then the price per copy is just R4 (inc. p&p) for orders over 20 copies – that's a saving of R5.50 on the regular cover price.

Make sure of your copies now – just fill in the order form below.

NEW INTERNATIONALIST, FREEPOST JH125, PO Box 32797, Braamfontein 2017. Tel: (011) 358 2120 / Fax: (011) 726 8430

New in **South Africa** – *the New Internationalist magazine*

THE NI
NEW INTERNATIONALIST
BURDEN OF HOPE
AFRICA IN THE 1990s
Winds of Change
The United Nations at 50

SEE the world through fresh eyes. Read the **NI** magazine. With 65,000 subscribers it's the biggest-selling international monthly on major world issues, such as **Race**, the **Arms Trade** or **South Africa**. For just R90 p.a. it gives you the overview. Much quicker to read than a book – and more up to date.

FREE MAGAZINE & WORLD MAP

See for yourself. Simply mail the form below (or fax/phone us) and we'll send you your **free introductory copy**, plus a **colour world map**. If you don't like the **NI** just tell us and you'll receive a full refund.

> ***'The NI is well worth reading as it respects the intelligence of its readers. It is independent, lively and properly provocative, helping keep its readers abreast of important developments in parts of our globe that risk marginalization. Read it!'***
>
> **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**

Your **NI** *no-risk* Trial Subscription **Order Form**

Yes! Please send me my introductory free copy and enter my subscription as below. To continue receiving the **NI**, I need do nothing; my subscription will start the following month. But if I wish to cancel and receive a full refund I will write and tell you within *15* days of receiving my free issue.

Sending your Order Form

Phone or fax this order today with your credit card details.

☎ **Tel: 011 358 2120 Fax: 011 726 8430**

Or post this coupon plus cheque/money order to:
New Internationalist, FREEPOST JH125,
PO Box 32797, Braamfontein 2017.

I wish to subscribe for:

☐ *1 year* **R90** ☐ *2 years* **R150** ☐ *3 years* **R210**

Name ....
TITLE INITIALS SURNAME (BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

Delivery Address ....

....

....

Postcode ....**Tel(code/no)** ....

☐ **I enclose my cheque/money order payable to New Internationalist Publications Ltd.**

Source **484**
Premium **602**

☐ **OR please charge my:**

☐ **VISA** ☐ **MASTERCARD** ☐ **AMEX** ☐ **DINERS**

Card expiry date ....

Card number

Cardholder's name ....

Signature ....

Today's date ....

NEW INTERNATIONALIST PUBLICATIONS LTD. REG. IN ENGLAND NO. 1005329. REG. OFFICE: 55 RECTORY ROAD, OXFORD OX4 1BW, ENGLAND

HUNGER – THE FACTS

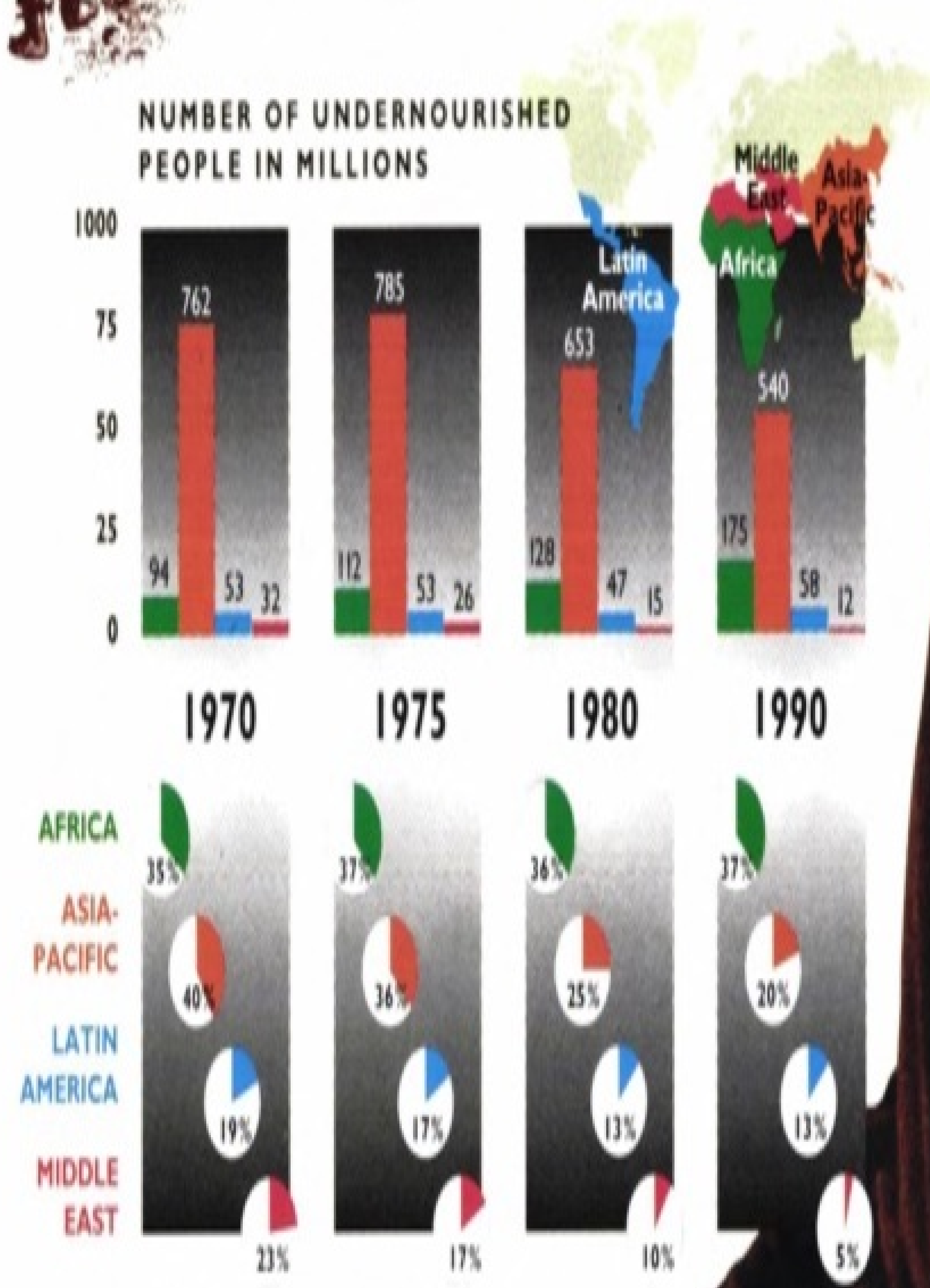
The world produces more than enough food to feed its entire population. Yet an estimated 35,000 people die of hunger each day. The **NI** examines the gap between the hungry and the greedy.

MARYLIN SILVERSTONE / MAGNUM

THE SCALE OF IT[1]

The number of hungry people in the world has actually fallen in recent years, despite overall population increases. But nearly 800 million people still face persistent, everyday hunger. Much larger numbers suffer from malnutrition and seasonal or temporary hunger.

NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE IN MILLIONS



PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION

DESERT BLOOMS[2]

The countries with the highest rates of agricultural growth are relatively rich nations making the desert bloom. Saudi Arabia has become the sixth-largest wheat exporter in the world.[3]

HIGHEST AGRICULTURAL GROWTH 1980-91

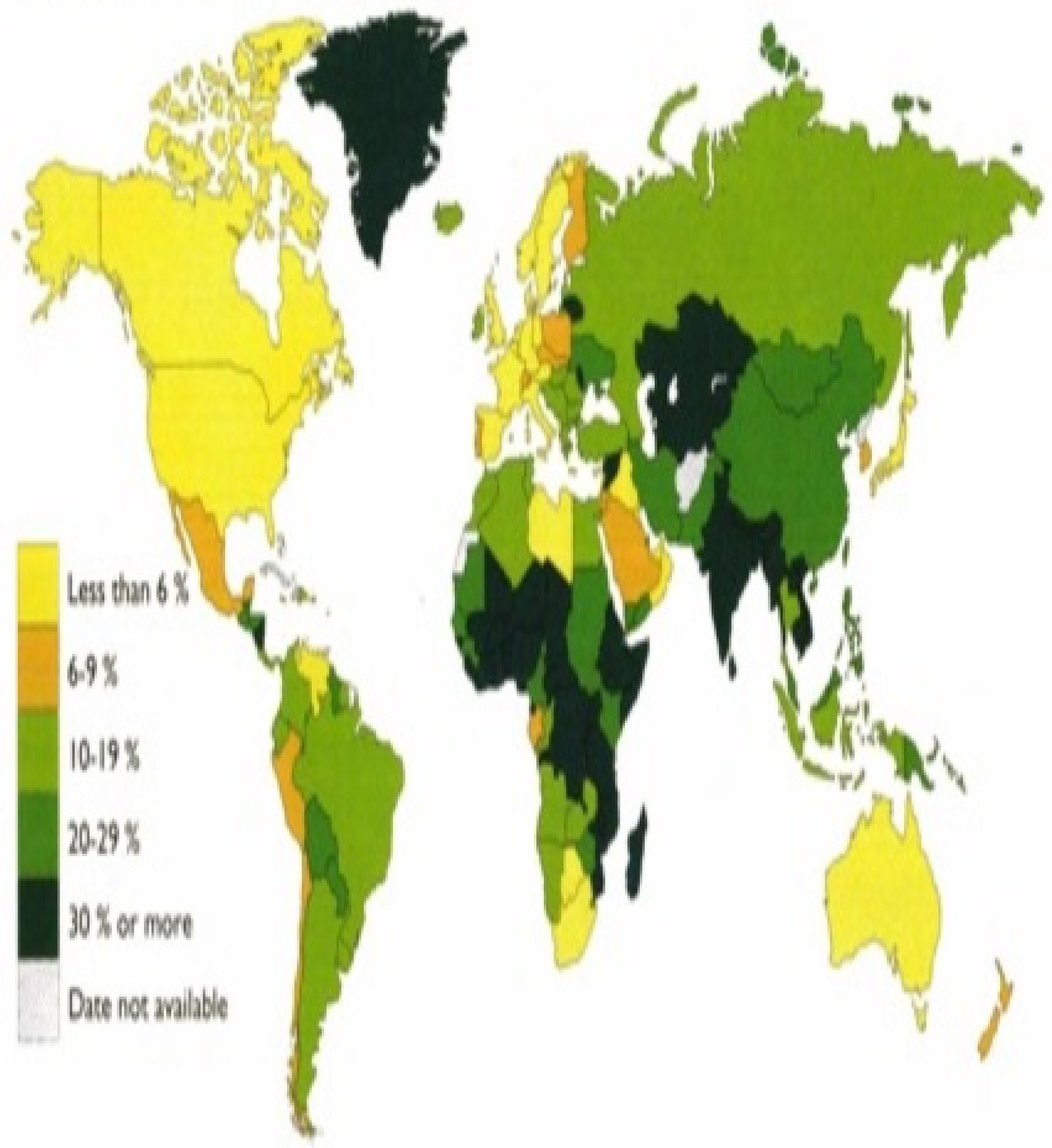
Average annual % increase in real terms

1 **Saudi Arabia**	**14.0**
2 **Jordan**	**8.1**
3 **Oman**	**7.1**
4 **Morocco**	**6.8**

EATING MONEY

Richer countries can choose: they have ample access to food and are less dependent on agriculture. The US is the world's second-largest producer of cereals and meat and comes third in fruit and vegetable production – yet agriculture accounts for only 2.3% of its GDP. European Union countries import twice as many agricultural products from the Majority World as they export to them.[3] Poorer countries have little or no choice.

SHARE OF AGRICULTURE IN GDP[4]



CRAVING FOR CASH

Cash crops are the only things some countries can export. But such crops take up land which could be used for growing food for local consumption. This wouldn't matter if the terms of trade were fair and cash-crop prices were higher. Cocoa shows how poorer countries provide for a hunger for chocolate in the rich world.

COCOA

TOP 10 PRODUCERS

	'000 tonnes[2]	Income (GNP per capita in US$, 1992)[1]
1 **Côte d'Ivoire**	**747**	**670**
2 **Brazil**	**290**	**2,770**
3 **Ghana**	**243**	**450**
4 **Malaysia**	**220**	**2,790**
5 **Indonesia**	**180**	**670**
6 **Nigeria**	**110**	**320**
7 **Cameroon**	**105**	**820**
8 **Ecuador**	**85**	**1,070**
9 **Colombia**	**50**	**1,290**
10 **Dominican Rep.**	**48**	**1,040**

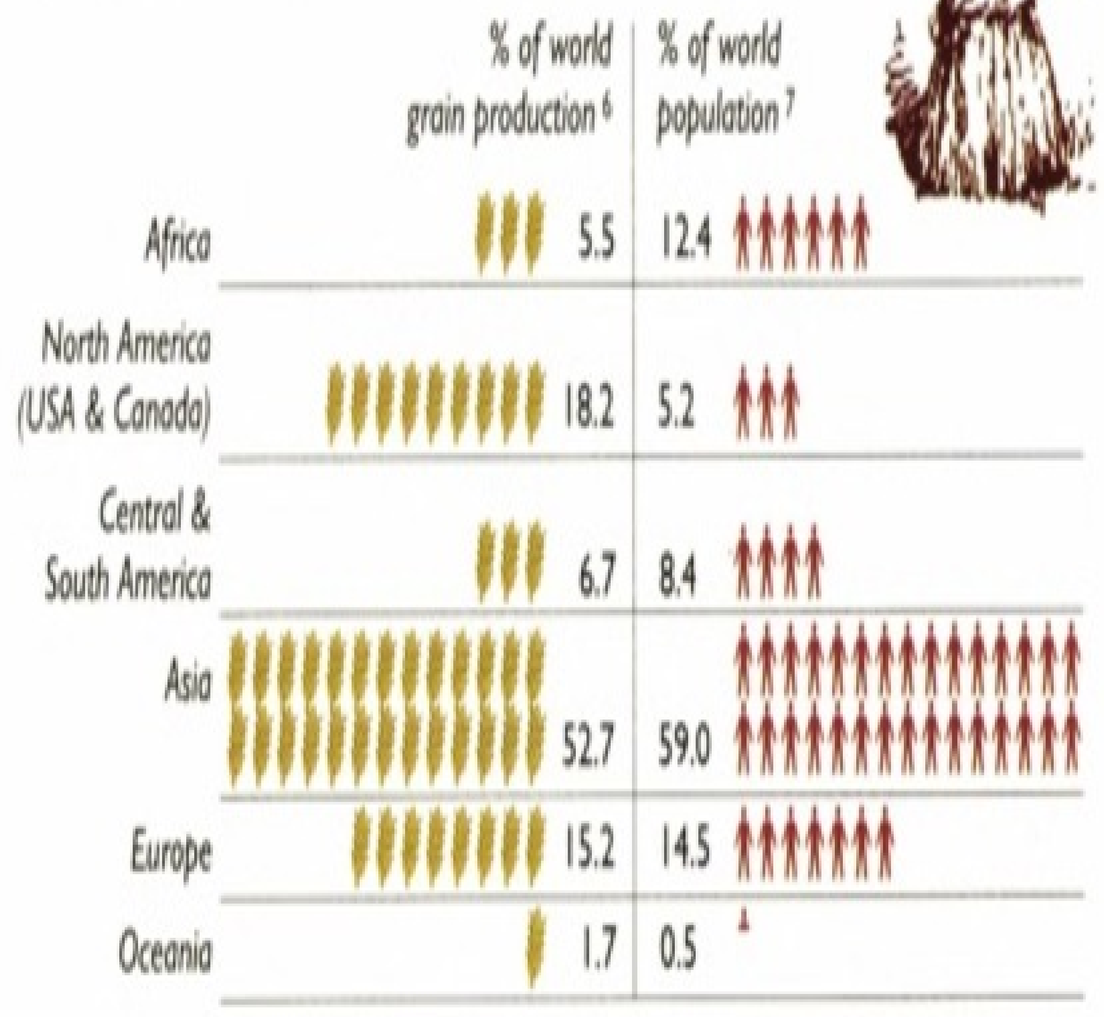
TOP 10 CONSUMERS

	'000 tonnes[2]	Income (GNP per capita in US$, 1992)[1]
1 **United States**	**593**	**23,120**
2 **Germany**	**264**	**23,030**
3 **United Kingdom**	**180**	**17,760**
4 **France**	**160**	**22,300**
5 **Japan**	**111**	**28,220**
6 **Brazil**	**73**	**2,770**
Italy	**73**	**20,510**
8 **Spain**	**60**	**14,020**
9 **Belgium**	**57**	**20,880**
10 **Canada**	**49**	**20,320**

Of all the money spent on chocolate in Britain, 15% goes to the Treasury and only 8% to the cocoa farmer.[5]

SHARES OF THE CROP

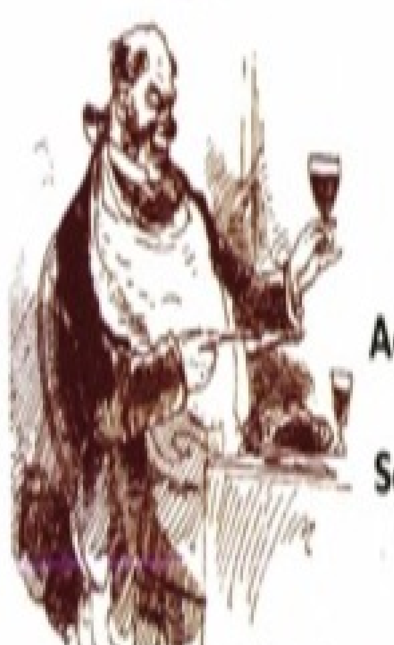
The rich world's proportion of grain production is significantly higher than its share of the world population.



	% of world grain production[6]	% of world population[7]
Africa	5.5	12.4
North America (USA & Canada)	18.2	5.2
Central & South America	6.7	8.4
Asia	52.7	59.0
Europe	15.2	14.5
Oceania	1.7	0.5

FEAST AND FAMINE[7]

The rich world has a glut – of food and obese citizens: in the US about a third of the population is overweight – $33 billion is spent each year in attempts to lose weight. In the poor world millions subsist on an amount of food that is simply inadequate for good health. An estimated 190 million children under the age of five are chronically malnourished.



The feast

Countries with highest daily supply of calories per head as % of requirements 1988-90*

Ireland	**157**
Greece	**151**
Belgium	**149**
Bulgaria	**148**
France	**143**
Spain	**141**
Italy	**139**
US	**138**
Hungary	**137**
Singapore	**136**
Aotearoa/NZ	**130**
UK	**130**
South Africa	**128**
Australia	**124**

The famine

Countries with lowest daily supply of calories per head as % of requirements 1988-90*

72	**Afghanistan**
73	**Chad**
73	**Ethiopia**
77	**Mozambique**
80	**Angola**
81	**Somalia**
82	**Central African Republic**
82	**Rwanda**
83	**Sierra Leone**
84	**Burundi**
84	**Bolivia**

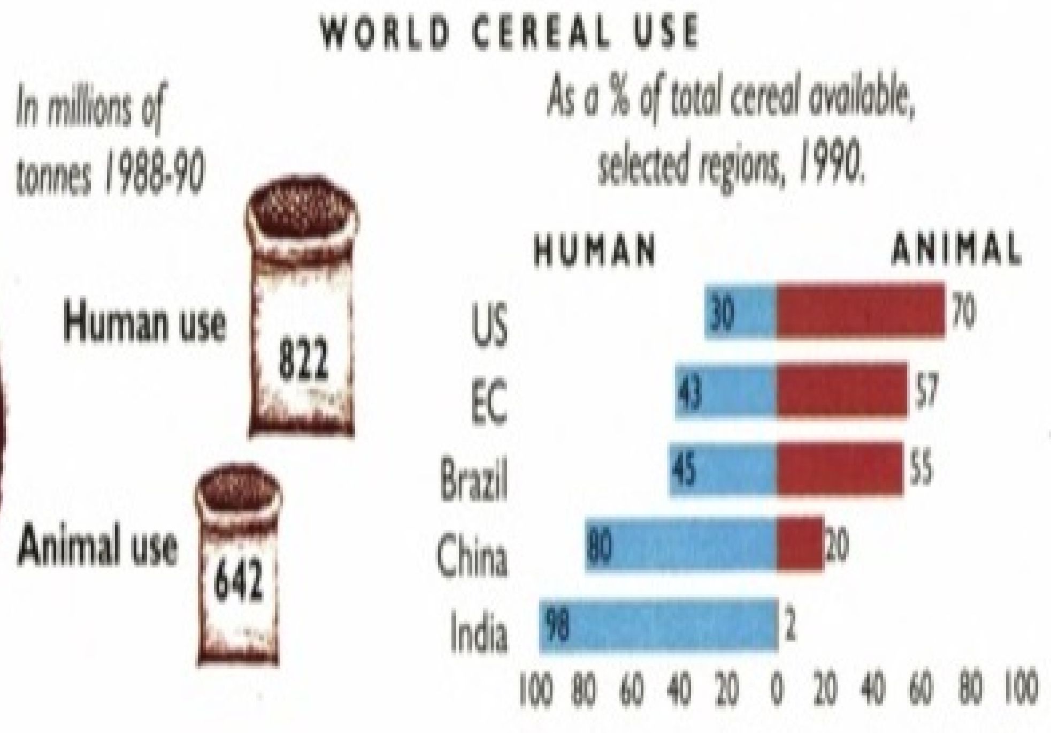
Shocking as they may be, these figures are only averages. There are hungry people in rich countries and those who can afford more than they need in poorer ones, which makes the contrast between greed and need even more dramatic.

*An adequate adult calorie intake is between 2,350 and 2,600 calories per day, depending on climate and kinds of work performed.

GRAIN FOR MEAT[3]

Farm animals consume nearly half the world's cereal produce. Growing grain to feed animals to turn them into meat is an inefficient business – an acre of cereals can produce five times more protein than an acre devoted to meat production.

WORLD CEREAL USE



---

1 Bread for the World Institute, *Hunger 1995: Causes of Hunger*, Silver Spring, 1994. **2** The Economist, *Pocket World in Figures 1995*. **3** Bertrand Delpeuch, *Seed and Surplus*, CIIR/Farmers Link, London, 1994. **4** The World Bank, *World Development Report 1993*. **5** World Development Movement. **6** FAO, *Production Yearbook 1993*. **7** UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children 1995*.

The attack of the shrimps started in the 1980s when city people discovered the great international demand. They moved in for the kill, practising mainly unscientific and unplanned shrimp farming. They were allegedly helped by the police and civil administration who are supposed to prevent such malpractice. They cared little for niceties such as the rule that to organize a shrimp farm the voluntary consent of 85 per cent of local landowners must be gained. They came with their political and police support and hired muscle. They have resorted to murder, rape and coercion to quash opposition from locals. Most small landowners like Bhushan have been threatened into leasing their land at an unjust rent.

Women have been in the forefront of protest because the flooding reduces the number of cattle, which have no pastures to graze in. This leads to a shortage of dairy products, commonly used in local 'baby-foods', and dung which is used for fuel.

The shrimp growers are reacting violently. One well-publicized case was the murder in 1990 of Karunamoi Sardar, a landless woman protester. Karunamoi has become a national symbol of the anti-shrimp movement and farmers' groups have erected a monument on the spot where she was killed. Nijera Kori, a non-governmental organization (NGO) with headquarters in the capital Dhaka, is organizing the women's protest. However, five years on, none of those accused of the murder have been brought to book and the women and staff members of Nijera Kori have suffered harassment. The shrimp growers are too powerful to be touched.

Meanwhile everything they touch dies. Chokoria Sunderban, an 18,000-hectare mangrove forest in Cox's Bazar, has been totally destroyed. Encroachment on Government forest land is common.

Yet the Bangladeshi Government thinks that shrimp farming is profitable. And anyone looking at the high price of shrimp in a Western supermarket could be forgiven for thinking that this is a cash crop that could work. But what the price tag doesn't reflect is the ecocide involved, which is ruining priceless land for generations to come and starving small farmers, many of whom are becoming the urban dispossessed. Last year Bangladesh's shrimp exports increased by 30 per cent and the trend is upwards.

The Government's latest bright idea is to turn an entire village – Abad Chandipur on the north edge of the Sundarbans mangroves – into a 'semi-intensive shrimp-culture industrial estate'. If the plan is successful the 500 families that live there will face eviction. The villagers don't want cash compensation for their land. If pushed they would settle for land of the same quality nearby, but they know the Government doesn't have it. They would be willing to consider taking charge of the shrimp farming themselves, but the Government isn't keen on the idea. The villagers' resistance has led to the plan being postponed for the time being.

Shrimp farming for export has, arguably, the potential to feed people in Bangladesh by improving their incomes. But for that to happen it would have to operate scientifically with local management rather than a few people pocketing all the profit.

The World Bank has run a project to popularize 'scientific' shrimp cultivation, but without success. Its efforts to help landless and small farmers through Caritas, a Catholic NGO, have been thwarted by the big shrimp farmers. And one of its own projects – Third Fisheries – has ended up, to no-one's great surprise, helping only the interests of shrimp growers from Dhaka and local heavies.

For farmers like Bhushan Chandra Roy the issues are dramatically simple. Ten years ago, before the shrimp farms, he hadn't experienced poverty and hunger. Now he is fighting to keep them at bay. ■

Philip Gain is a Bangladeshi journalist who has also written on ethnic minorities, pesticides and the trade in toxic materials. Thanks to **Shishir Moral** for some of the information in this article and to **Drik Picture Library** for their help.

Never-never land: watery wastes where food once grew. (top) Packers at work: destination, the US.

DR SHAHIDUL ALAM / DRIK PICTURE LIBRARY

THE ISSUES

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Shrimp farming is growing in Bangladesh, India, Honduras, the Philippines, Ecuador and elsewhere around the world – and so are local protests. Shrimp farming consumes even more resources than rearing cattle for meat. The damage it does to land is irreversible.

The end product is a delicacy which no-one can seriously claim to 'need'. Other cash crops grown to tempt the jaded palates of the rich often have little nutritional value. Shrimps fetch a high price – but in real terms the costs outweigh the profits. If the fertility of the land and its resources are lost, there will be shortages for generations. The consumers don't pay this price.

In Bangladesh, where 75 per cent of rural workers have no land to farm and two-thirds of children under five are malnourished, access to food is of prime importance. Bangladesh has made great strides in basic healthcare and family planning. But the shrimp trade enriches élites, produces few jobs and actually robs large numbers of their livelihoods. When the land becomes too polluted to continue farming shrimp it will lie deserted and barren.

Sounds familiar? Whether in the rich world or the poor, it's the story of short-sighted commercial use of land

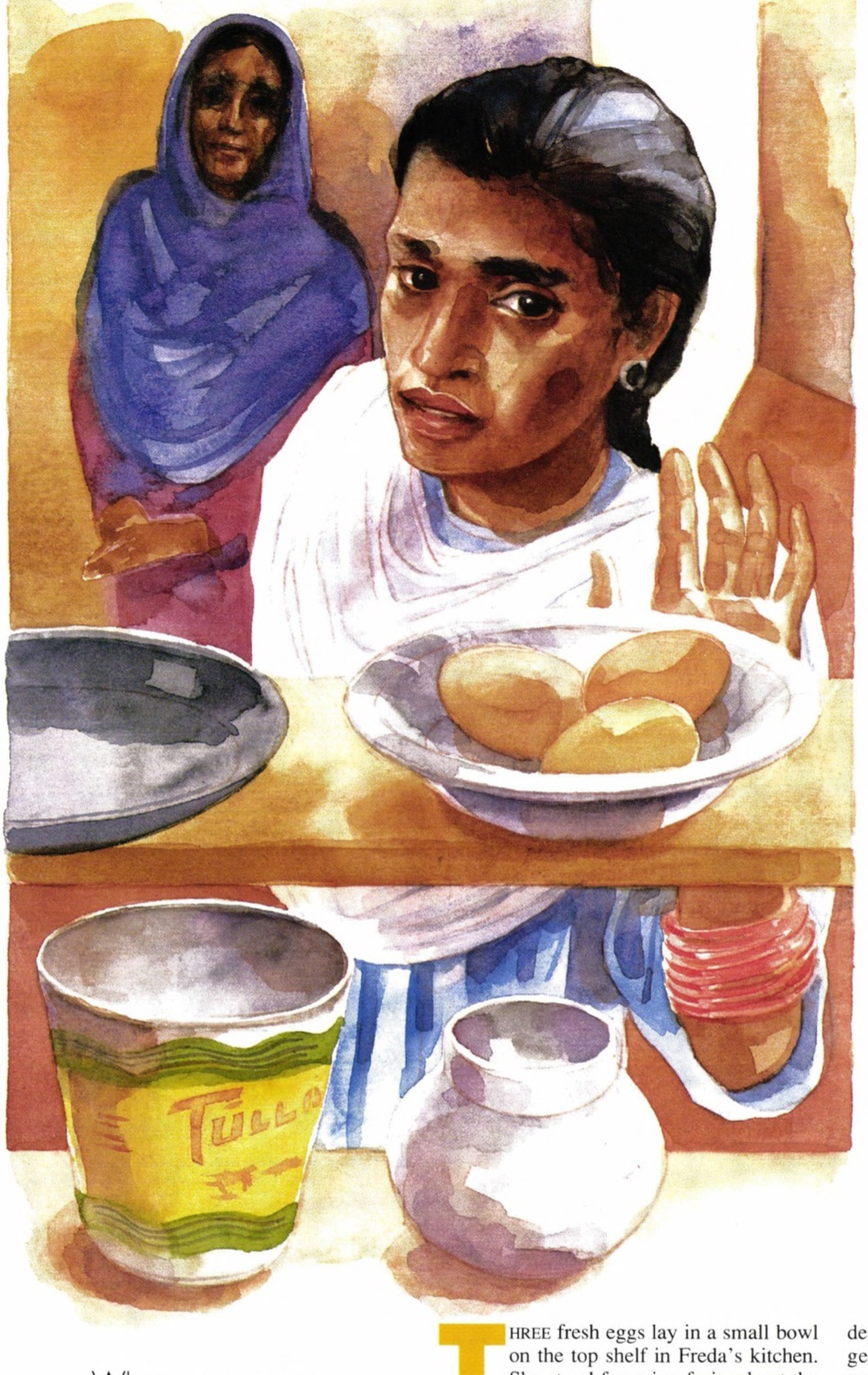
Working for change

All shrimp grown on farms in Bangladesh is exported, but anti-shrimp groups are not calling for a boycott just yet – this would hurt the few people shrimp farming does employ. Campaigners are working instead to develop common strategies of resistance among villagers to keep resources accessible to, and managed by, local people. Some have been successful and can declare their communities 'shrimp-free zones'.

Groups to support are:

Nijera Kori
2/4 Block C
Lalmatia
Dhaka 1207

Uttaran
Jatpur Tala
Satkhira
Bangladesh



SARAH JOHN

The cost of living

When an egg goes missing the fault-lines in Mary's family grow deeper. A short story from Pakistan by **Maria del Nevo**.

THREE fresh eggs lay in a small bowl on the top shelf in Freda's kitchen. She stood frowning furiously at the bowl as if it had insulted her. 'Yesterday Naseem gave me one piece of meat only. And it was this small!' she said to her daughter Mary, making a tiny circle with her thumb and forefinger and screwing up her eyes for further emphasis. 'And now,' she went on in a whisper, 'an egg has gone and I can guess who has taken it!' Freda glanced accusingly out the window to the room across the yard where Naseem, her daughter-in-law, lived.

Mary was the youngest of four. Her elder sister had married and moved to her in-laws. Her elder brothers had a room each for their families in her mother's house. When her father was alive things were different because Mary and her mother were dependent upon him and he was a kind and generous man. In those days her mother never had to question her status in the house and her sisters-in-law would not have dared question it either. But after her father's death, Mary and her mother were left to the mercy of Mary's brothers and then the rumblings of conflict vibrated through the walls and divisions appeared between the three families of the house.

Mary made no comment to her mother about the egg. She was tired of the endless bickering over food. She was often hungry herself. The pains in her stomach woke her up in the night and most mornings she got up feeling light-headed. Sometimes she stood before the mirror and inspected the bones which protruded offensively from her shoulders and ribs and then she closed her eyes and prayed to God that He might make her disappear altogether.

As Christians, arranged marriages were not customary in Mary's family. Her brothers and sister had chosen their own spouses, and when Mary was 18 she became desperate in her search for a husband. Only when she married would she belong and, like her sisters-in-law, be valued and looked after for being a mother.

Having failed to find a suitable Christian boy Mary fell in love with Ahmed, a Muslim. They dated a few times but when she fell pregnant Ahmed abandoned her. During the pregnancy Freda became anxious. Mary was so small that sometimes she wondered if her daughter would survive childbirth. And when she gave birth to an eight-pound baby boy the whole family expressed amazement at such a miracle.

Ahmed immediately reappeared. He wanted his son in his parents' home and Mary there to look after them. Even though her mother disapproved of a mixed marriage, Mary converted to Islam, changed her name to Hafza and moved to her in-laws.

Her mother-in-law kept a watchful eye on Mary who, terrified of being thrown out of the house, obeyed her every command and dared not become a burden on the family resources. Although, when she awoke at dawn, the hunger pangs gnawed at her stomach, she waited until midday for a bowl of dal and always refrained from taking meat at the evening meal. While she watched her pampered son grow more healthy each day, Mary's own unhappiness seemed to be reflected in her increasing loss of weight.

After months of complete isolation from the outside world Mary's sister visited her. They were allowed a few minutes precious privacy before Ahmed's family crowded round to offer customary hospitality. 'You know what these people are planning to do?' whispered her sister, and at Mary's blank expression she went on. 'They have to put up with you until Imran is seven only. Don't you see? When he reaches that age they can get custody of him, and then they will throw you away like a dirty dish rag.'

But Mary was parted from her son when he was only three. Her husband, who had quickly tired of his emaciated and moody wife, kicked her out of the house and threatened her with never being allowed to see Imran again if she attempted to fight for custody.

Initially Mary's family were pleased to have her back. They took every opportunity to remind her that she should have known better than to marry outside her own community. But when it became clear that she would remain an added burden on them and arguments over the cost of living became more frequent, they began to resent her presence in the house. Then it dawned on Mary how her situation in her mother's house differed little from that in her in-laws'.

As she did most afternoons, Mary went across to Naseem's room to help look after her nephews and nieces. She watched Naseem as the older woman fed her baby son. She was tall and well-built, just like Nadia her younger sister-in-law. Mary's brothers often joked about Naseem and Nadia's weight which had increased since their marriages. But secretly they were proud of their wives and satisfied that they could never be accused of neglecting the mothers of their sons. Mary only hoped that her brothers lived long lives for she would never wish her mother's sad fate on either Naseem or Nadia.

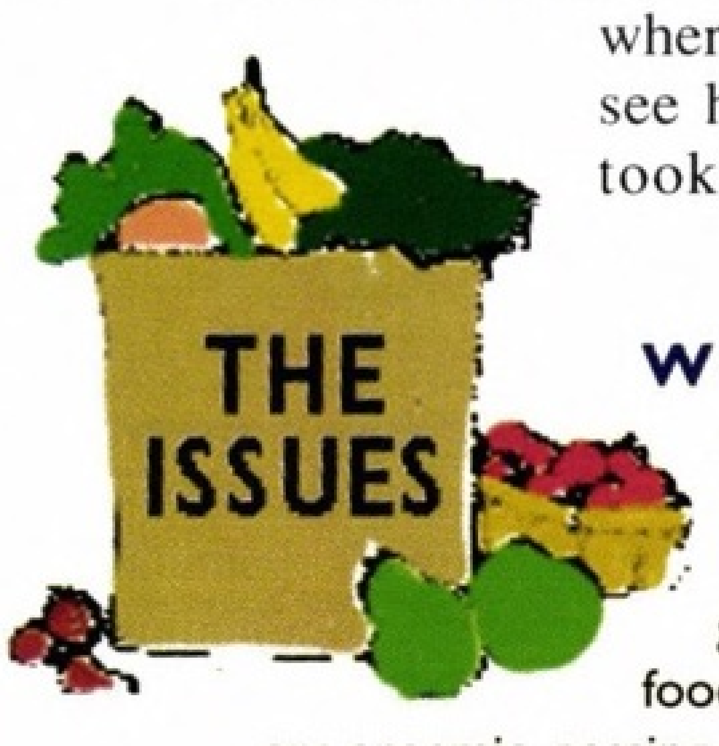
'Did you hear that one egg has gone from the kitchen?' Naseem asked her in a whisper. 'Mummy thinks I gave it to my son. But you know who took it?' Naseem tilted her head in the direction of the room where Nadia lived. 'Did you see how much chicken she took last night? A pile as big as this! And the breast she took too, which I was saving for my husband.'

Mary listened to Naseem in silence. She didn't doubt that when Naseem and Nadia talked together they would accuse her of eating the egg. The thought made her cringe with shame.

That evening as Mary and her mother sat together on the bed with their evening meal placed before them, Mary looked out across the yard into the kitchen opposite. Her nephews and nieces were all gathered around the table chattering happily over their food. She watched as Naseem and Nadia piled their husbands' plates high with boiled rice and even higher with lumps of beautiful lean lamb. She glanced at her mother who was poking at a piece of gristle disdainfully and she looked down at her own bowl of gravy for a while, before forcing herself to raise the spoon to her lips. ■

> *'... they can get custody of your son, and then they will throw you away like a dirty dish rag.'*

Maria del Nevo is a freelance writer who has lived and worked in Lahore.



WOMEN'S HUNGER

Mary's story would sound familiar to most women of the Indian subcontinent.

Behind the data on poverty and hunger lies the assumption that everyone within a family is affected equally. This is clearly not the case – women in general work more than men, get paid less if they get paid at all, and, when food is an issue, they get less to eat. In South Asia 64 per cent of pregnant women are anaemic, passing on a legacy of malnutrition to the infants they bear.

Increasingly amongst the poorest of the poor, women find themselves abandoned by men, working without respite just to keep the family together. Into a typical day they fit caring for their children, working in the house and working for a wage. They are also the most vulnerable – 80 per cent of the world's refugees are women and their dependent children.

Undervalued though it may be, women's work is responsible for at least half of all the food grown in the world. Yet they own no more than one per cent of the world's farmlands.

Whether it is access to food, land, credit or paid work, women's decisions tend to be controlled by those in power – usually men.

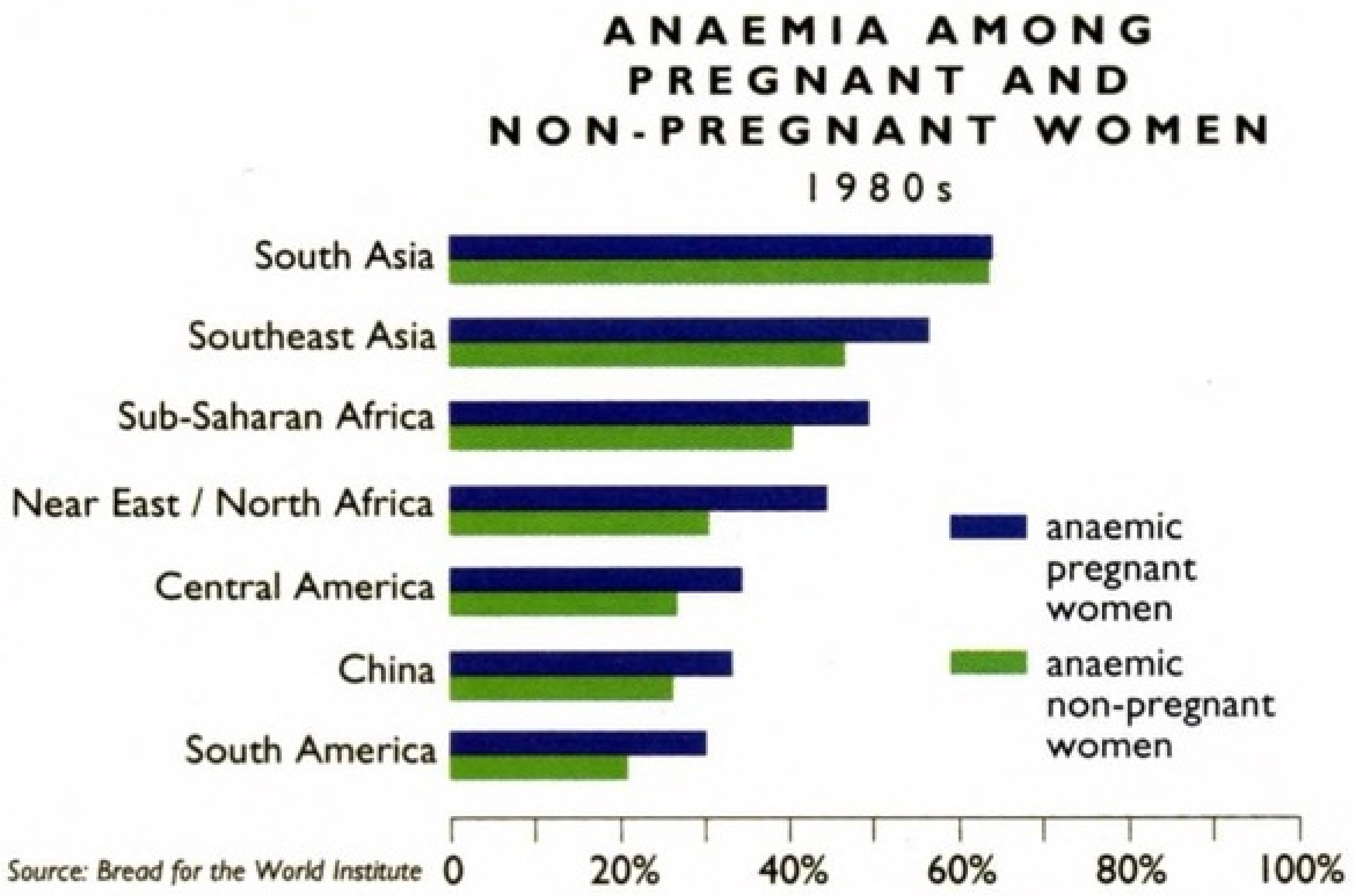
Working for change

Women's hunger is the most basic reflection of their unequal position in society. Most of the main development agencies working in the Majority World now have goals to encourage women's self-sufficiency.

Here are some organizations to contact from the region of our story:

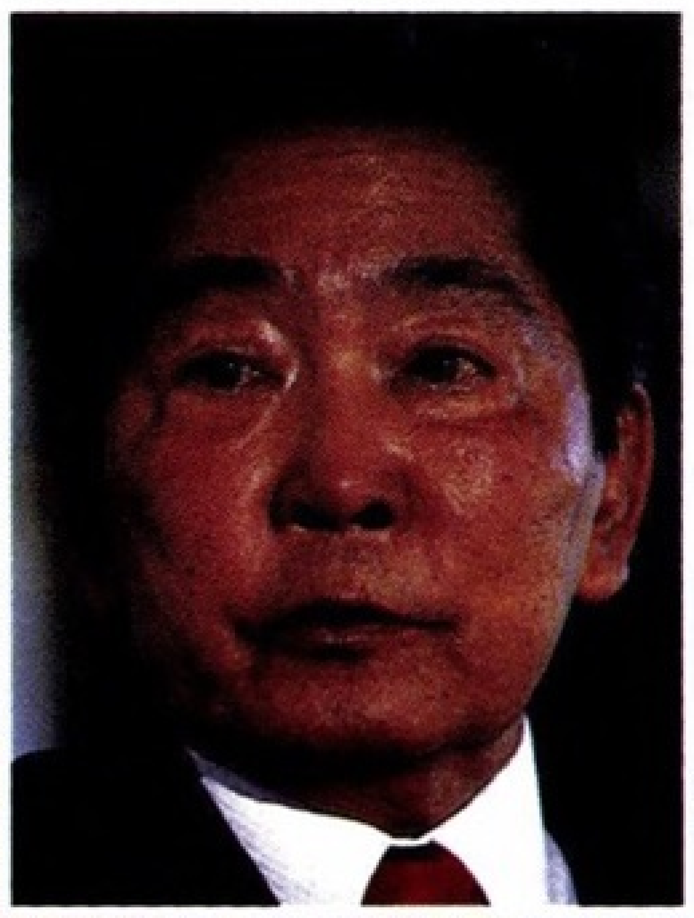
AURAT Foundation
Convent Sargodha
College Road
Sargodha, Pakistan
Co-ordinates 17 women's groups in Sargodha.

DAWN
Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era
contact Hameeda Hossain,
Asia Representative
7/c New Bailey Road
Dhaka, Bangladesh
DAWN is a global network of Southern activists and academics.



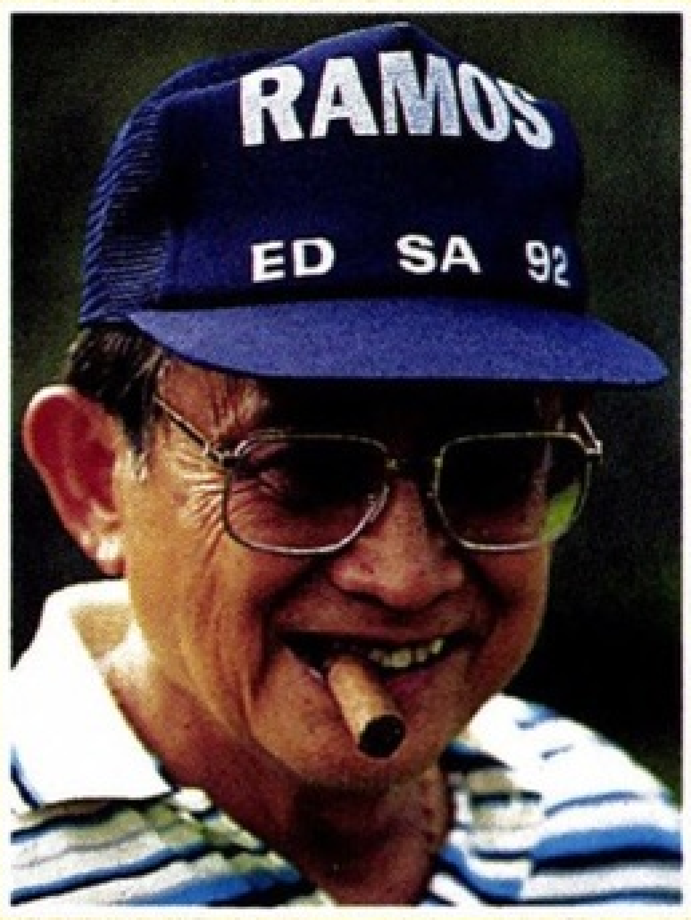
Source: Bread for the World Institute

The legacy of malnutrition: passed from mother to child.



B. ASATO / FRANK SPOONER

ERIC BOUVET / FRANK SPOONER



RICHARD VOGEL / FRANK SPOONER

Forbidden territory

Structural adjustment has taken centre stage in the Philippines and left the change that's really needed – the redistribution of land – in the wings. **Dinyar Godrej** reviews the performance.

THE Philippines is a farming nation. Three-fifths of its population live and work on farmland. The vast majority of them – 70 per cent – earn too little to afford a proper diet.

The reason has nothing to do with the amount of food they grow. It's because only 5 per cent of farming families own around 80 per cent of the land – the vast majority of the rest are landless or sharecroppers.

For over a quarter of a century this injustice has spurred armed rebellion. Every President of the Philippines has come into office by promising land reform: none has delivered. This is because the Congress is dominated by large landowners and the Presidents themselves owned hefty chunks.

The unrest that built up under President Marcos *(top left)* was defused by the Corazon Aquino *(middle left)* – the next President – whom people believed would give back their land. Instead the land-reform promise took a back seat to coup threats, import liberalization and debt rescheduling. Farmers were sacrificed to the concept of 'national recovery'.

Progress under the current President Ramos *(bottom left)* has been slight. The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Programme (CARP) has redistributed 30 per cent of the 10.3 million hectares identified for reform. These have been mainly Government-owned and public lands, leaving the large private landowners untouched. Critics say the Programme was 'designed' to fail because those who enacted it into law were the same landowners whose lands would be targeted by CARP.

There have been other setbacks – like 160,247 hectares of farmland converted to industrial, residential or commercial uses. Ramos has also cancelled some of the land titles awarded under President Marcos's land-reform programme. Now the landlord-dominated Congress wants to exempt about 1.7 million hectares of commercial farmlands and prawn farms from CARP.

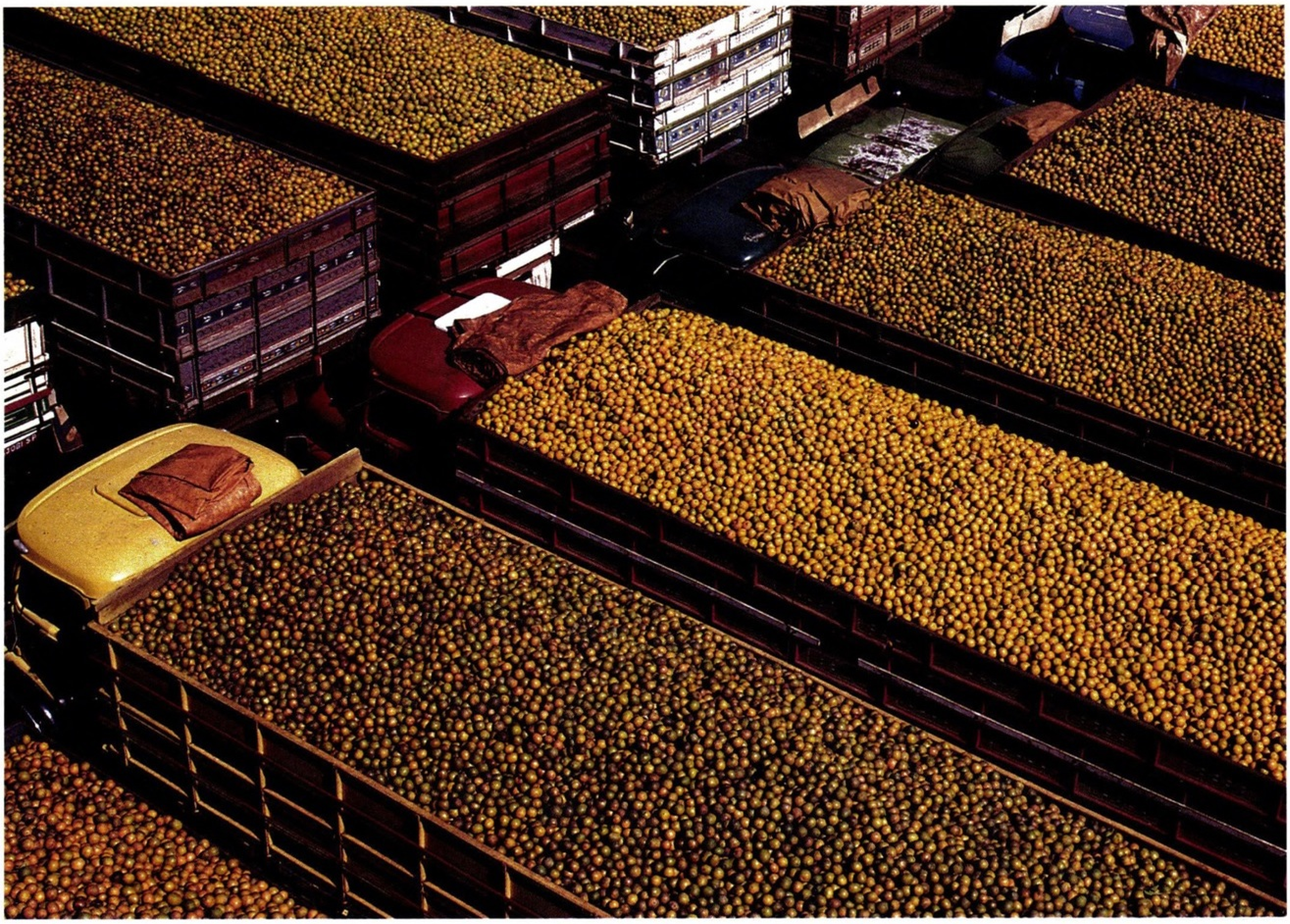
As if all this weren't enough, the Government seems determined to destroy local food production by importing cheaper Thai grain and promoting cash cropping. The Philippines is one of the oldest guinea pigs of the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), leading the Government to follow a debt-driven, export-oriented industrialization track and to abandon genuine agricultural and rural development.

The real 'adjustment' – land reform backed with help for small farmers – waits in the wings. Its presence on the stage may be further delayed because it would involve restructuring society. And the prime actors – the privileged few – could get very upset by this. ■

The Philippines has numerous activist groups working for land and agrarian reform. These are useful points of entry:

Philippine Peasant Institute (PPI)
Rm 319 PSSC Building, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City 1100, Philippines
Tel: (+) 632 9229621 ext. 314/339 Fax: (+) 632 9243767
Demokratikong Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas –
Democratic Peasant Movement of the Philippines (DKMP)
50 K- 8 Street, Kamias Road, Quezon City
Tel: (+) 632 9216710

MAIN PIC: THOMAS HöPKER / MAGNUM



MARIA LUIZA M. CARVALHO / PANOS

Captured by the Company

It's in your fridge and in your face. Yet you don't even know it's there. **Brewster Kneen** has been watching what a US-based transnational company has been up to.

SEÑORA BLANCO of Caracas, Venezuela, is accustomed to buying high-quality pasta. Rosa, her much poorer cousin, buys a cheaper brand made by the same Company, which also makes a third brand with middle-class quality and price. The Company imports durum wheat from its affiliate in Canada and mills and manufactures it into a variety of pastas, well aware that Señora Blanco's class constitutes a highly profitable but small market.

The Company, a very large US-based transnational, is using Venezuela as an experiment in integrated operations. Venezuela is one of the few countries where the Company is visible at the retail level. It got to be the largest pasta maker there because it recognized the class structure of the society and produces brands for each class, not just for the élite or just for the poor. Whether the Venezuelan farmers whose crop is displaced by the imported grain can afford the pasta is another question. But that is not the Company's problem.

Orange juice is popular throughout Europe and North America. Regardless of the retail brand, there is no way of knowing who the real supplier is, although there is a 50/50 chance that it comes from one of the three companies in Brazil that control 80 per cent of Brazilian frozen concentrated orange-juice exports.

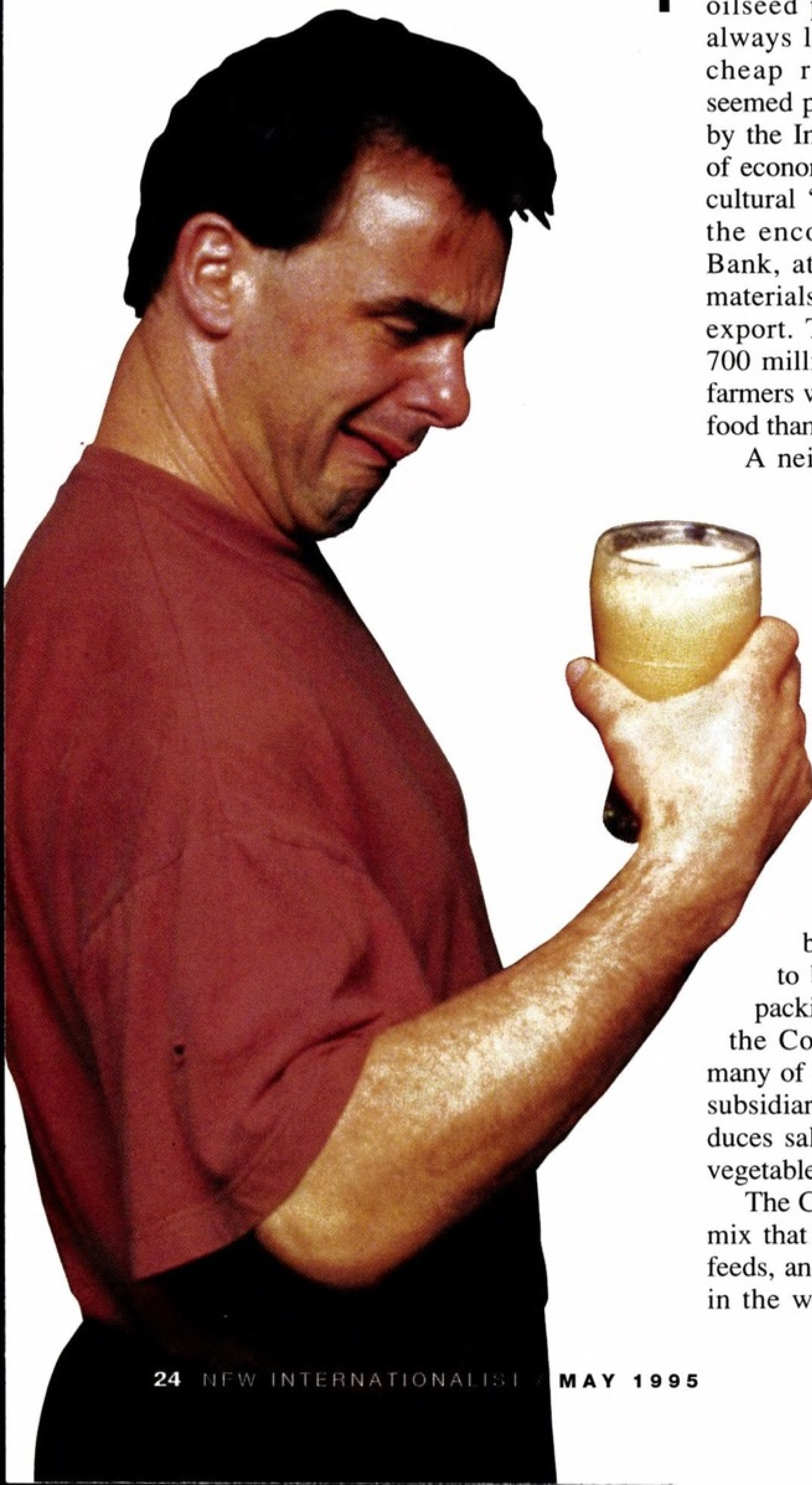
The Company that makes the Venezuelan pasta is one of these, and it despatches a custom-built tanker-load of concentrate every five days from Santos, the port of São Paulo, to terminals in Amsterdam and Elizabeth, New Jersey. From these terminals the concentrate is delivered to food manufacturers, bottlers and packagers, and dairies for retail distribution. In Brazil this Company also owns four citrus farms, the largest of which has 1.37 million trees on 13,260 acres of reclaimed ranch land, tended by a mere 400 employees. It is probably the largest single orange grove in the world.

Most of the oranges the Company processes, however, still come from 'independent' contract growers. Like the Company's contract poultry producers in the US Southeast who carry all the risk of the birds dying, the orange growers carry all the risk of crop failure. The Company got into the business via dried citrus pellets that it was buying from Brazilian processors and shipping to Europe for use in its livestock-feed business.

Fortress walls

When Pieter van den Plaas joins his friends for a glass of Carlsberg beer in Amsterdam, the barley malt it was made from could well have come from the same Company that imported the orange juice he drank earlier in the day. It's the same story when George and Mark go out for a Millers in Minneapolis. The Company is the largest producer of malt in the world.

Make mine a Millers: but who's making the malt?



ULRIKE PREUSS / FORMAT

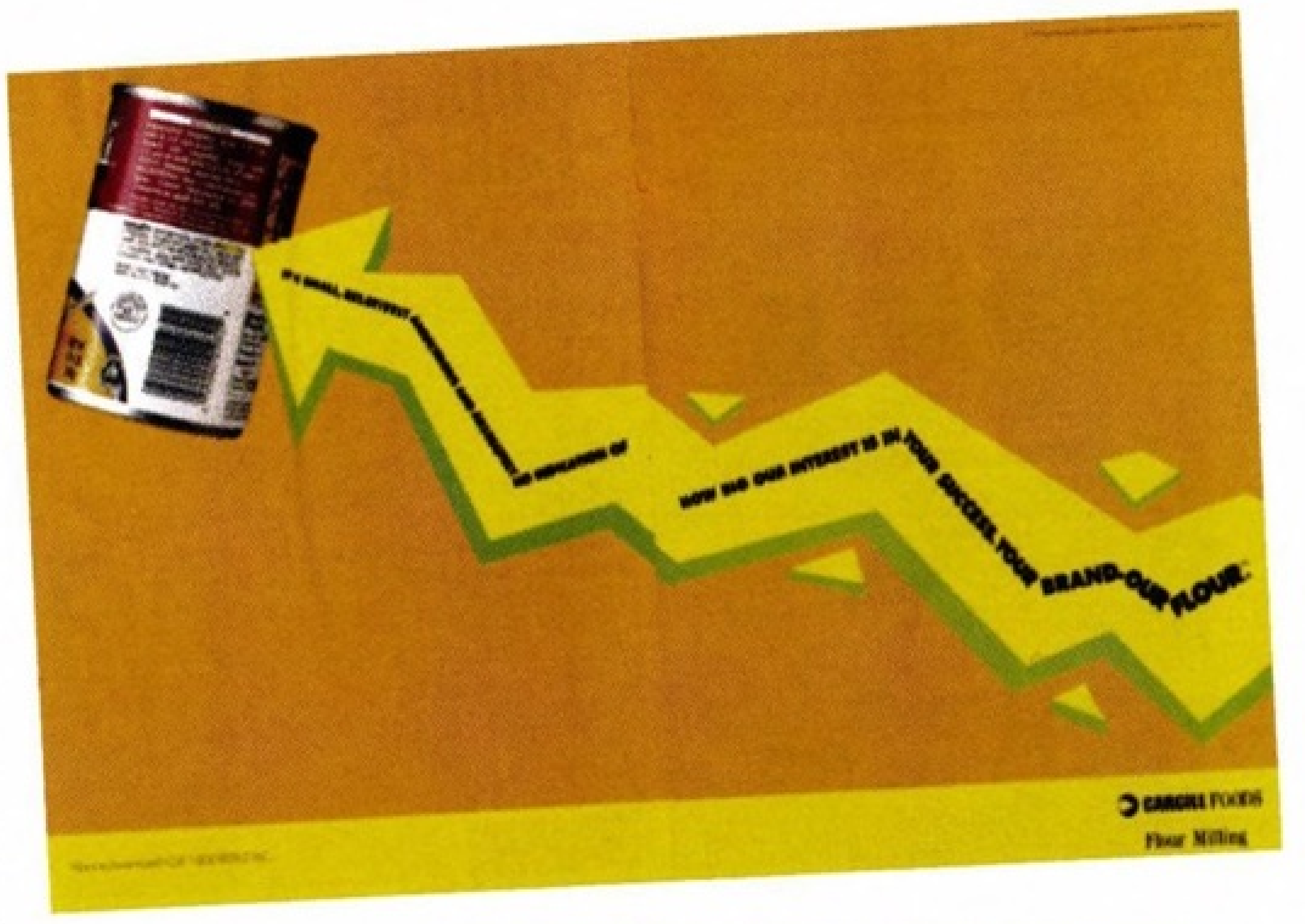
In Sindhanoor, north of Bangalore in India, farmers were tempted into planting hybrid sunflower seed the Company had advertised as being of superior quality. Hanamana Gouda was told he would get 40 quintals per hectare. He and his neighbours got only five. This was no better, but much more costly, than the yield of his traditional seed. Hanamana Gouda got together with other farmers from nearby villages and they decided they would be better off without the seed from the Company, without a need for commercial fertilizer, and without the Company itself. So early one morning they demolished the seed-distribution facility the Company was building. The Company's response was to rebuild, but this time surrounded by a fortress wall with guard towers to protect its plant from the farmers.

The Company, as the largest oilseed processor in the world, is always looking for new sources of cheap raw materials, and India seemed promising. It was encouraged by the Indian Government's policies of economic 'liberalization' and agricultural 'modernization' aimed, with the encouragement of the World Bank, at turning India into a raw-materials source for processing and export. These policies assume that 700 million self-provisioning Indian farmers would be better off purchasing their food than growing it themselves.

A neighbourhood bakery in Winnipeg was surprised to find that the only salt it could get came from the Company; but it does make sense for the third largest flour miller in the US to be also a producer and supplier of salt. The 'Leslie' label is familiar to shoppers in the US. Most of the salt comes from Port Hedland, Australia and the San Francisco Bay region of the US. The Company claims 10 per cent of the global market.

More and more of Canada's beef cattle are gathering in Alberta to be slaughtered in Canada's largest packing plant at High River, owned by the Company. The finishing ration for many of the cattle is supplied by Nutrena, a subsidiary of the same Company that produces salt, orange juice, malt, hybrid seed, vegetable oils and flour.

The Company also supplies the molasses mix that is the base or 'glue' for livestock feeds, and since it is the largest grain trader in the world, it supplies the grain itself, whether corn or wheat, barley or rice, as well as the protein supplement of soybean or canola meal. Following in the footsteps of poultry growers and orange-grove owners, more and more of the cattle feeders are becoming contract suppliers for the Company.



THOMAS HOEPKER / MAGNUM

MARYLIN SILVERSTONE / MAGNUM

'Your brand, our flour': the Company advertises its invisibility in a trade paper (top). Bearing the burden in Guatemala (middle). Beyond the Company's clutches: Indian farmers prefer their own seeds (bottom). Delivery at an orange juice factory in Brazil: the Company gets its lion's share (previous page).

Invisible giant

You'd suppose such a company, with so much power around the world, affecting so many people's lives, would be a household name. Chances are, however, you've never even heard of it. It's called Cargill Incorporated and was established in 1865 in Minnesota, where its headquarters have remained ever since. Today it is active in 50 lines of business in 60 countries with sales of nearly $48 billion in 1994.

Much of Cargill's activity is invisible not only to the public eye, but even to its own employees and those with whom it does business. It is corporate policy to keep a low profile. Cargill has always been a 'private' company, meaning that its ownership shares have never been publicly traded, with the disclosure of its finances this would require. Entirely owned by members of the Cargill and MacMillan families until 1992, the company then established an Employee Share Ownership Plan that broadens ownership but keeps the company private.

As a private company Cargill has no public responsibility. The family shareholders are so wealthy (worth over a billion dollars each) that there has been little or no pressure to increase the financial return to them. The result, as Cargill is proud of saying, is that the company can reinvest its earnings in the countries where it does business. It behaves like an oil slick, opportunistically spreading into contiguous spaces: buying into new lines of business, expanding existing ones, and all the time integrating its operations.

Futures for sale

Cargill was once known primarily as a grain trader. Currently, however, its most profitable lines of business are corn milling – a highly visible, material activity – and financial markets, the invisible trading of non-existent commodities.

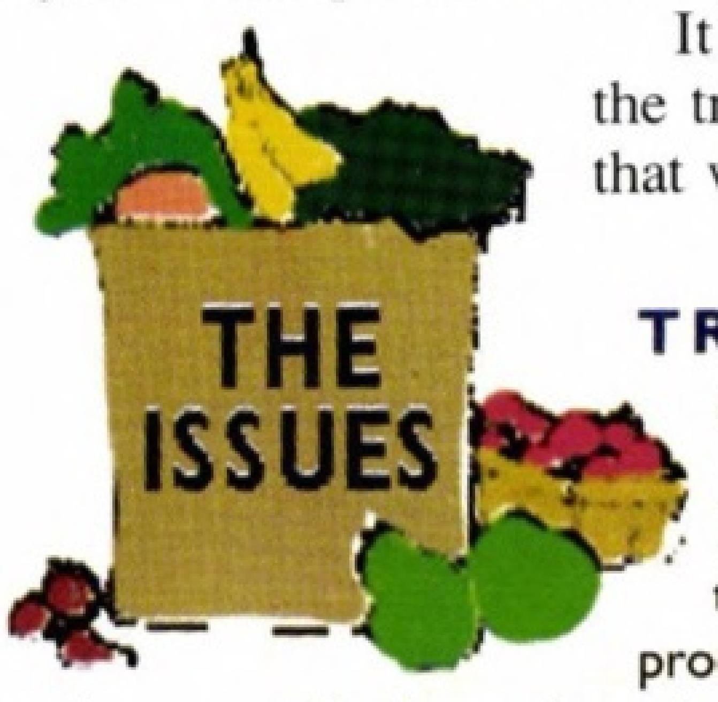
In corn processing the money is made in the production of High Fructose Corn Syrup (now the primary soft-drink sweetener), ethanol, corn gluten, corn meal, corn oil, citric acid and other products. In the Financial Markets Division the money is made only partly by trading in real commodities, including most of those Cargill produces and processes. More significant these days, however, are 'futures' contracts on these same commodities, which speculate on levels of production and prices in the future. Cargill has now added an even more speculative level of trading to its lines of business: 'derivatives' and 'financial instruments' are traded as commodities, but they are abstractions based on the movement of stock indices, interest rates, mortgages or currencies.

With its vast experience of organizing and operating integrated agricultural systems, including trucks, barges and ships, and with its ability to source raw materials worldwide, Cargill is now putting itself forward as the new model of a 'development agency'. In a 1993 speech Cargill chairman Whitney MacMillan said that a new institution has emerged – 'the modern global company' – which is 'capable of playing a major role in attacking the world hunger problem, if allowed to do so'.

The problem is that the market economy and the transnational corporation have never shown themselves either interested in or capable of looking after the welfare of everyone. In MacMillan's own country, the US, where Cargill's operations are most highly developed and integrated, 10 per cent of the population remains more or less permanently outside the market economy, depending on Government food stamps for their daily bread.

It's a win-win game for the transnational corporation that writes the rules, ensures they become government policy – as Cargill has done for years in the US and many other countries – and then carries them out on its own terms. It is not necessarily in the interests of the rest of us to become franchise farmers, labourers or customers in Cargill's system. ■

Brewster Kneen is the author of a forthcoming book on Cargill to be published by Pluto. He has also written *From Land to Mouth: Understanding the Food System* and *The Rape of Canola*. He publishes *The Ram's Horn*, a monthly newsletter that looks at food systems.



TRADE & TRANSNATIONALS

About 20 transnational companies control most of the world's agricultural trade. They aren't interested in relieving hunger, they're interested in big bucks. They manipulate markets to get the best deals, overpricing where there's no competition, underpricing when they want to kill it. They use the produce of farmers worldwide and speculate with it. Farmers, for their part, must sell at low prices, buy their seed and fertilizers from the transnational at high prices and carry all the risks of crop failure themselves.

Governments usually encourage them. In the rich world transnationals cream off a healthy proportion of the subsidies on food. They carry out most food-aid and commercial-food transactions made by governments and are amply rewarded for these services. In the poor world they are welcomed by governments eager for investment and better technology.

They are a law unto themselves, pulling out rapidly if conditions are unfavourable in a particular country and setting up shop elsewhere, especially where local conditions allow the maximum exploitation of labour. Operating in several countries at once they manipulate financial systems. Global attempts to regulate their activities have been feeble and ineffectual.

The transnationals are now funding biotechnology research for improved plant varieties. But their concern is not with feeding the world. They invest in crops which will fetch a good price rather than staples like wheat and cassava. The largest part of this research is into new strains of plants which can cope with the agrochemicals they market.

The transnationals, far from being neutral, are the agents of unfair trade. World trade is built on the commodity dependence of poor countries who have no option but to try and increase production, thereby lowering prices. Commodity prices today are at pre-1950 levels. In 1985, when many parts of Africa suffered from famine, emergency aid worth three billion dollars was provided. That same year plummeting commodity prices meant that Africa received $19 billion less for the raw materials it sold to the West.

Working for change

Fair trade linking the North and the South in a pattern of co-operation rather than exploitation would provide more food security. The produce of small farmers in the Majority World also needs to be safeguarded against that of industrial farmers in the rich world. The latter may be cheaper, largely due to subsidies, but the former is the only way forward for food-deficient nations.

To control the corporations, poorer countries need to be in a better bargaining position – with sufficient technological and financial backup of their own. Forming trade blocs in the South would help, but poverty forces countries to compete with each other for investment.

In India change is coming through farmers who have held rallies of half a million people to oppose Cargill's plans to replace their seeds with genetically altered hybrids. Other Indian protesters have scared off Cargill from taking over salt production in Gujarat state.

Consumer action in the West can support fair-trade products and local produce. It can also pressurize corporations to provide a better deal for their workers and producers in other countries.

Getting informed is the first step. Here are some organisations which can help:

Transnational Information Exchange
Transnational Institute
Paulus Potterstraat 20
1071 DA Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: (+) 312 0626608

Multinational Monitor
PO Box 19405
Washington DC 20036, USA
A monthly magazine which uncovers the dirt and publicizes the opposition.

THE WORLD'S TOP 12 AGRIBUSINESSES

Philip Morris	United States
Cargill	United States
Nestlé	Switzerland
Unilever	UK/Netherlands
Pepsico	United States
Coca-Cola	United States
Conagra	United States
RJR Nabisco	United States
Grand Metropolitan	United Kingdom
Elders IXL	Australia
Anheuser Busch	United States
BSN Group	France

Source: Agrodata

SIMPLY... MAKING THE FOOD GO AROUND

Global food surpluses and hunger don't add up. As long as the politics of greed continues to thrive, people will stay hungry. But is feeding the world just pie in the sky – or can it be for real?

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

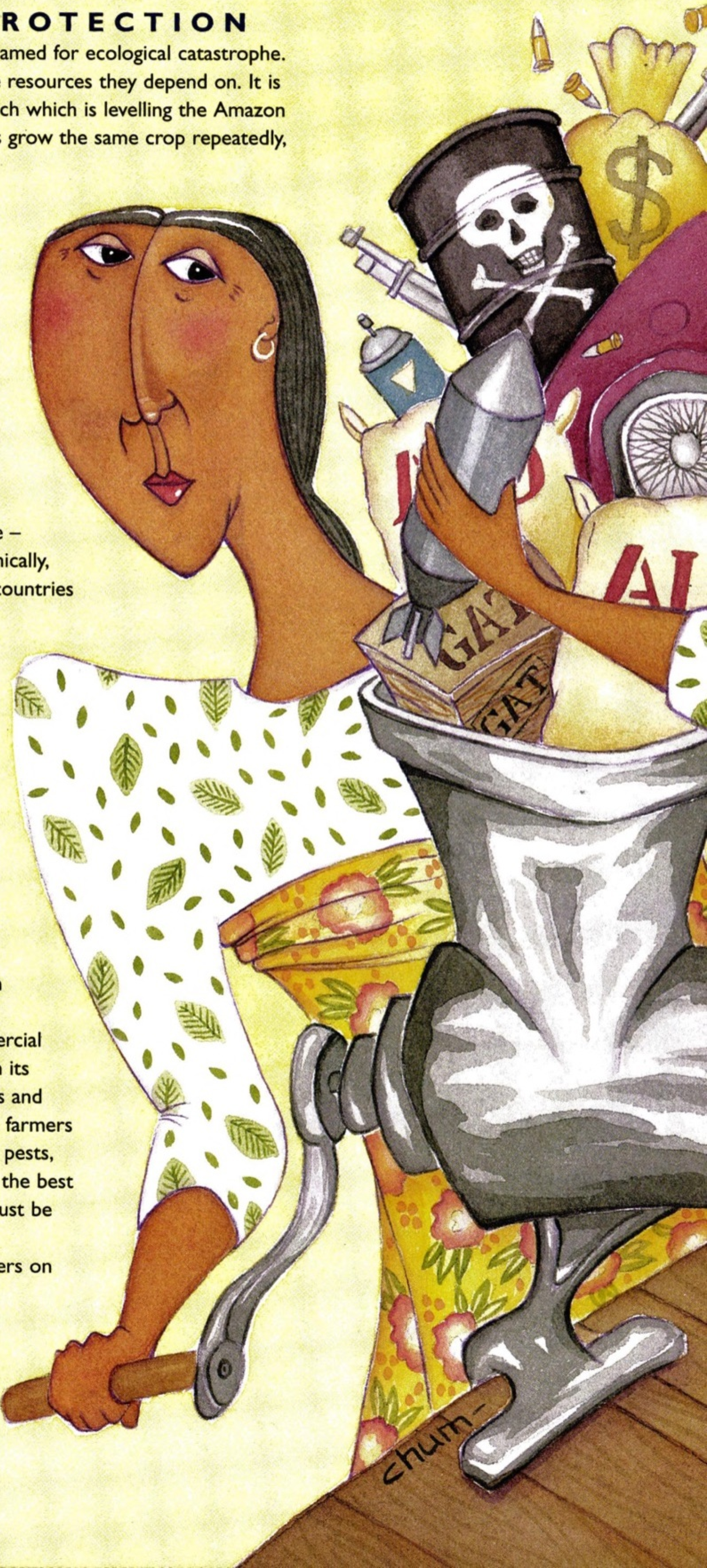
Overpopulation in the Majority World has often been blamed for ecological catastrophe. In fact poor people have more at stake in preserving the resources they depend on. It is ruthless, short-sighted commercial exploitation by the rich which is levelling the Amazon forests for furniture, narcotics and beefsteak. Plantations grow the same crop repeatedly, earmarking their produce for the West. Such practices supply the whims of 'developed' nations, leaving all the costs in the South. To preserve a common future the environment must take priority. We can help by encouraging green produce and questioning our own consumption.

FAIR TRADE

The terms of international trade favour wealth absolutely. The rich world keeps the South wedded to commodity production by putting up tariff barriers to manufactured goods. Barriers to textiles and clothing alone cost poor countries $53 billion a year in lost trade – this equals the total of all Western aid to the South. Ironically, maintaining poverty in the Majority World means poor countries can buy fewer of the manufactured goods the rich are so eager to supply. There is no such thing as a 'free' market; what we have to strive for is one that is fair. The first step is to get informed and use our choices as consumers and investors wisely. As citizens we can oppose unfair trade and voice that opposition to our political leaders.

APPROPRIATE AGRICULTURE

There is no quick fix for areas with food shortages – the answers for each region are specific to it. The Green Revolution got hijacked by rich élites who priced small farmers out of the market. In industrial countries commercial farming, propped up with subsidies, continues apace with its arsenal of polluting chemicals, its pesticide-resistant pests and declining yields. The real answers lie elsewhere, with the farmers who make the best use of their lands, fighting pests with pests, growing a variety of crops to keep the soil fertile, saving the best seeds for the future. For their efforts to succeed they must be able to make their own decisions, instead of having governments, big agribusiness companies and policy makers on the other side of the globe (such as the World Bank and the IMF) setting out chapter and verse.



EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

Women inherit every disadvantage and none of the power. They work more hours than men – yet 70 per cent of the world's adult poor are women. Four hundred million women of childbearing age weigh less than 100 pounds – their malnutrition is passed on to their infants. In 'developed' countries women earn half as much as men. Often their work may not even be counted as work. Women produce half the world's food and own one per cent of its farmlands. Equality with men is the basic issue. The best way to attack women's hunger is by improving access to fairly-paid work and to land. Education also improves women's control over their fertility, their health and standard of living.

LAND REFORM

A billion people living in the villages of the Majority World have no land of their own to farm. Two-thirds of them live in India and Bangladesh. In Guatemala and Peru 85 per cent of rural workers are landless. Wherever the problem exists there is usually a history of thwarted land-reform movements – thwarted by the bigwigs who own the land and have political clout. Giving land to poor farmers so they can grow their own food would not work on its own. It would have to be backed by improved access to credit and the means of production, like machinery. But land reform could create the jobs in the countryside which poor people from rural areas seek in city slums.

PEACE

War causes hunger – whether in Iraq reeling under economic sanctions after the Gulf War or in Afghanistan where 15 years of fighting have wrecked food production. Conflict robs people of homes and livelihoods – refugees have no land to grow food and no work to enable them to buy it. The world spent $767 billion in 1994 on its military might – more than the total income of the poorest 45 per cent of the world's population. The 'peace dividend' has yielded $935 billion since 1987 through reduced arms spending, but none of it has gone towards international development aid. We need to lobby our leaders to work for peace and to use its dividends wisely. Greater stability would give poorer nations the opportunity to reduce their own military expenditure.

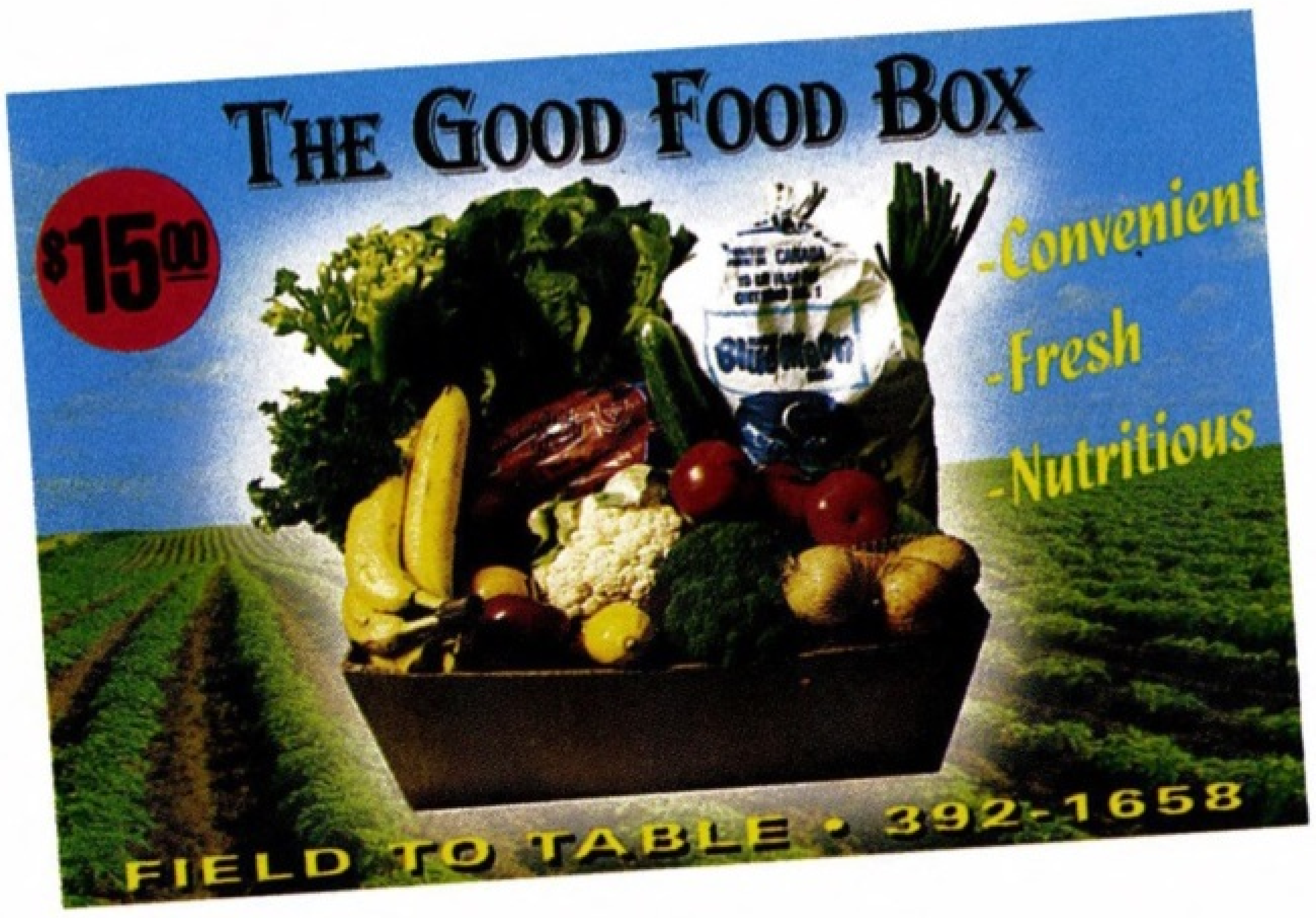
SHARING THE WEALTH

More than a billion people live on less than a dollar a day. The wealthiest one-fifth of the world's people control about 85 per cent of the money, the poorest fifth about 1.4 per cent. Cant about the free market creating opportunities for poor people is meaningless when wealth calls all the shots. Filthy-rich individuals apart, the politics of greed makes no economic sense for the wealthy countries that pursue it. Economic success in the Majority World would mean increased trade and more, rather than fewer, jobs in the West. By sharing wealth we could actually be safeguarding it.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Gross inequality is not just about economics; it is about moral choice. We need to replace the harmful myth of the individual making a killing – so important to modern imperialism – with the idea of the individual within a community. People aware of their connectedness can build both compassion and strength. Many poor communities with little to spare are working towards this ideal – whether it's poor women running communal soup kitchens in Peru and Bolivia, or farmers across Latin America involved in a programme to exchange knowledge. The real New World Order starts here.

ILLUSTRATION BY CHUM McLEOD



Crap Dinner and the Good Food Box

It's cheap, it's fresh and it benefits both buyer and seller. **Murray MacAdam** checks out a special package.

It's a dismal setting for a renaissance.

Scrapyards, boarded-up buildings and vacant lots dot this industrial wasteland in downtown Toronto. But in the back of an ancient brick warehouse there is life. A makeshift assembly line; men and women of all ages fill boxes with bananas, potatoes, oranges, carrots – all tantalizingly fresh. Homeless people work alongside students, Spanish-speakers alongside other Canadians.

These boxes of fresh fruit and vegetables will find their way that night into the kitchens of people in poor neighbourhoods across Toronto. Each customer has paid $15 for their box; less than they'd pay at a supermarket for food of lower quality.

The Good Food Box is a pioneering effort to break the reliance of thousands of Canada's poor on food handouts. Caught between high unemployment, low wages and grossly inadequate social-assistance rates, poor Canadians often have no choice but to turn to free-food distribution centres – called 'foodbanks' – in order to eat. Two million people in 465 communities across Canada rely on handouts for at least some of their food each month.

Foodbanks are a sour, frustrating experience. 'You take what they give you,' says Dave, an unemployed young volunteer, between drags on a cigarette. 'The attitude is: you're getting a free meal, don't complain.'

The Good Food Box is the latest initiative of FoodShare Metro Toronto, a community organization working against hunger. Several years ago the group focused on lobbying the Government for higher minimum-wage and social-assistance levels. When those efforts failed to pay off, demoralization set in.

'We asked ourselves: isn't there something we can do immediately to make a difference in people's lives?' says FoodShare executive director, Debbie Field.

They found that it was possible to make advances on the hunger issue that couldn't be made on income security. Why not enable poor people to stretch their food dollars further?

Inspired economy

Learning about self-help projects such as Peru's vast community-kitchen movement, and about the impact of hundreds of thousands of women cooking together, inspired new strategies. Inspiration also came from bulk-purchase consumer movements in countries like India and South Korea.

Hence the Good Food Box, a way in which low-income people working together can bypass the capitalist food system, says Field, and develop alternatives they control themselves. 'We're asking people to boycott the dominant food industry, an industry based on food as a commodity.'

The program combines the economies of scale involved in bulk purchasing with extensive community involvement. Paid staff buy fruit and vegetables from wholesalers and, where possible, direct from farmers. As much Ontario produce is included as possible, to support local farmers. The food is then delivered to public-housing projects, community centres and other drop-off points.

Paying for food avoids the stigma felt when going to foodbanks. 'The bottom line is, people are paying for what they get,' says Errin Stone, a volunteer since the program began. 'It's not a charity, it's a business.' Stone is unemployed but hopes that his hands-on experience in ordering food, coordinating volunteers and pricing will pay off through a future career in the food industry. Without its wave of volunteers, most of them women, the Good Food Box simply would not happen.

The enthusiasm has already spread beyond Toronto. In the rich agricultural area of Niagara, south-west of Toronto, another group of volunteers pack food boxes one morning at a housing co-operative in the city of St Catharines. Sales have soared from 205 boxes last July to over 700 in December. The program is sponsored by a local non-profit housing agency.

'When I get to the end of the month we're down to Kraft Dinner – I call it Crap Dinner: hot dogs, stuff that's not expensive,' says Rene Fisher from Welland, who is a mother of four. 'By the end of the month we're out of everything. I buy a bag of oranges and they're gone in no time. This stuff [the Food Box] is fresh, economical and it's good for you.'

The program also creates some work for people who desperately need it. Packing the boxes in the town of Fort Eire meant a few hours of work for some people on social assistance just before Christmas. 'You should have seen the excitement on their faces when they were paid,' comments promoter Joan Stewart. 'You would have thought you'd given them a million dollars.'

The Good Food Box is about much more than cheap, healthy food. For many poor people food is a cause of stress, since you

Here's to health! Mary Lou Morgan and Errin Stone with the week's best budget buy.

MURRAY MACADAM

worry about running out of it. The Box helps transform the whole act of eating into something fun and interesting, as the contents vary from month to month, depending on what's in season and on customer requests. Tucked in with each box is a newsletter with a program update, recipes and information on local produce.

FoodShare works on several other fronts. Its program to help schools provide meals grew out of an awareness that hungry kids were showing up at school too tired or irritable to learn properly. It also counters the junk-food message beamed at kids by the fast-food industry. Community gardens where poor people can grow some of their own food are another initiative. FoodShare continues to lobby against Government cutbacks which threaten to increase poverty.

Hunger hotline

Many people still have no alternative to emergency food assistance. FoodShare's Hunger Hotline directs them to their nearest foodbank or to other assistance. Volunteers handle about 2,000 calls every month, calls which reveal the scarring impact of poverty on people's lives and self-esteem. 'They often feel they have to give an explanation of why they're calling,' says Jennifer, a hotline volunteer. 'They feel they're being judged. "I'm not this type of person normally," they'll say.'

Canada's unemployment problem has eased only slightly during what some call 'the jobless recovery'. When Hunger Hotline workers ask callers how they can help, a common response is: 'It sure would help if you could find me a job.'

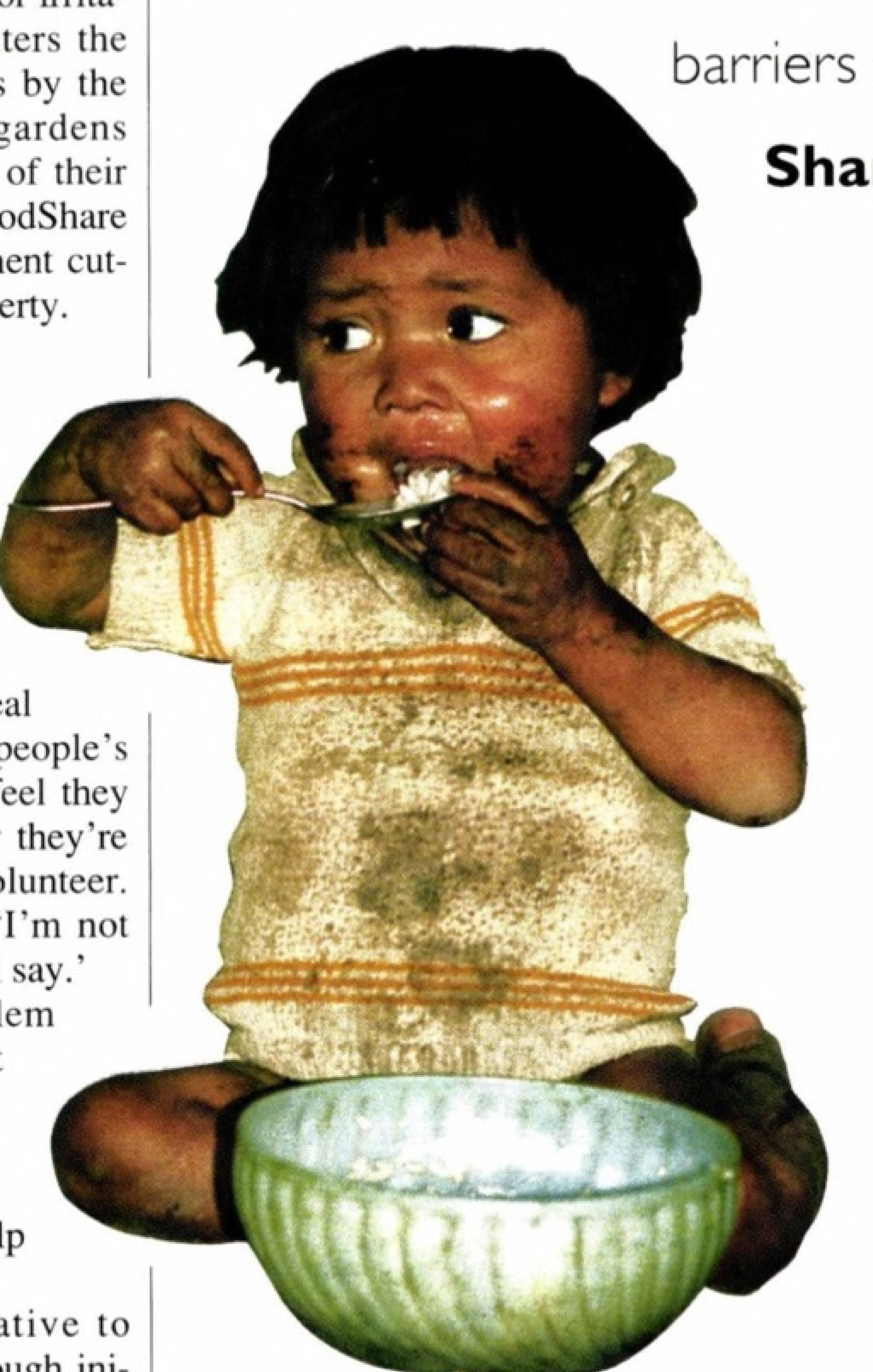
In trying to set up an alternative to Canada's giant food companies through initiatives like the Good Food Box, FoodShare has its work more than cut out for it. The food industry giants 'don't even know that we exist', admits Debbie Field. Despite healthy sales increases the Good Food Box Program is still far from the break-even point. FoodShare subsidizes it through support from its 10,000 donors. 'My challenge is to build this into a self-sufficient business,' says co-ordinator Mary Lou Morgan. 'Yet you're dealing with people with no money. It's a contradiction.'

Nonetheless, in the space of a few years 10,000 people, most of them poor, are benefiting from FoodShare's various initiatives. Its work to build a consumer-run food system is slowly taking root in Ontario. The energy it has sparked may mean a future with more dignity and self-reliance – and fewer frustrating trips to the foodbank – for Canada's poor. ■

Murray MacAdam is a freelance writer in Toronto specializing in community economic development.

Jacqueline's garden

The Campaign Against Hunger has swept Brazil with thousands of committees cutting across barriers of money, race and class. **Alex Shankland** visits one of them in a São Paulo *favela*.



SARAH ERRINGTON / CAMERA PRESS

'SHARING doesn't mean giving what's left over; sharing means giving what others need.' The sentence glares admonishingly down from the porch wall of Caxingui parish church. Caxingui, a leafy suburb, is one of the last outposts of middle-class São Paulo before the formless mass of the outlying slums – the *periferia*.

Its church is a dreary concrete building, but it provides a welcome haven from the traffic grinding past it towards the megalopolis. The church is also the original meeting place of one of the first local committees to be formed in Brazil's extraordinary Campaign Against Hunger.

My wait here is for Nádia, one of the committee's founder-members.

Nádia, when she arrives, proves to be stout, friendly and businesslike. We set off through the maze of back streets that lead to the *favela* of Jardim Jacqueline (Jacqueline's Garden). It's clear when we arrive that the slum settlement is no garden, but the fact that it sits within the largest and wealthiest metropolitan region in South America is reflected in the presence of a few urban facilities: a tangle of wires overhead indicates electricity, the winding alleys are paved and washing-tanks suggest access to running water. Nonetheless, Jardim Jacqueline has one thing in common with the far more squalid *favelas* of the Brazilian Northeast and Amazon – the pervasive presence of hunger.

The nine members of the committee to whom Nádia introduces me are a mixture of slum-dwellers and suburbanites. Brazil is riddled with distinctions of social rank, yet here everyone – teacher, tannerywoman, sociologist, cleaner or headmistress – treats everyone else with easy familiarity and genuine warmth.

This is the result of hard work over the course of the 18 months since the committee began. It formed in response to the call to arms issued by Herbert 'Betinho' de Souza, founder of 'Citizens' Action Against Hunger and Poverty and for Life' – commonly known as the Campaign Against Hunger or 'Betinho's Campaign'.

The committee's original members were active in the Workers' Party (PT), Brazil's main left-wing political movement. Frustrated with the limitations of party politics as a means to bring about social change, they were searching for more practical methods to fight injustice when the appeal swept the country in mid-1993.

'We'd been looking for a way to work fast,' adds Nádia. 'Everyone was fed up with bureaucracy.' The Campaign's formula of flexible, local actions based on volunteer committees working directly with the poor offered a way forward.

Cheerful and energetic Marlene, who works in the church-run crèche of Jardim Jacqueline, set about rallying her many

LÍDIA YOGUI

The committee (above) and Marilda and Nádia (below) deliberate on rice, beans and daycare centres.

friends in the *favela* to take part. After planning meetings which established the extent of hunger in Jardim Jacqueline and neighbouring Vale de Esperança (Hope Valley) and located the families most in need, the committee decided to start collecting 'basic baskets' of food. Nádia remembers slogging round the local supermarkets to beg for the extra kilos of rice which were needed to complete the first set of baskets. The creativity of the committee in organizing events (including a rock show where tickets were exchanged for kilos of food) and building alliances (including an association with the local Jewish business community), together with the groundswell of support for the Campaign, meant that the food flowed more freely thereafter. As many as 190 families a month began to receive the 'basic baskets'. Nevertheless, during the course of 1994, 'compassion fatigue' began to set in among the usual donors; it became increasingly hard to meet targets.

Moving on

By this time the Campaign itself had moved on. Emergency food provision had given way as a priority to the much more complex challenge of job creation. For Jardim Jacqueline, the committee came up with a scheme to create an industrial-scale community kitchen which would fund itself by selling ready-made meals to building-site workers. But raising money for it proved beyond their capacity and they decided instead to complete the building of a daycare centre begun and abandoned by the Church. This will employ 18 people and provide care for 240 children who are left on the streets while their parents are out working. Many of these kids are already being drawn into local drug gangs. There are plenty of 12-year-old cocaine addicts in the *favela*,' says Marilda, who has watched Jardim Jacqueline grow and change over 20 years.

She describes how the *favela* grew up in an area of scrub and forest around the two local sources of employment: a brickworks and the municipal rubbish-tip on which her father worked as a bulldozer driver. It expanded as São Paulo drew in a stream of migrants attracted by the increasingly elusive dream of a steady job and a school for their children. On average, the journey has brought the committee members over 1000 miles from their family homes to the *favela*.

Almost all of them come from peasant farming families, and several say they would like to return to the land – Nina in particular talks nostalgically about 'that free life'. This would seem to confirm the correctness of Betinho's choice of agrarian reform as the Campaign's key theme for 1995. But in practice creating a mass return to the land is likely to prove an even more intractable challenge than job creation.

The diversification of the Campaign stretches the committee's resources. 'There are a lot of projects and there's only so much energy available to carry them out,' says Nádia. There is also a host of other difficulties. Inter-community tensions stirred up by rival drug gangs have tested their diplomatic skills. Although the level of involvement is great among women, the men are notoriously absent. 'A woman is more likely to take a day off work to be present at a meeting than a man is to turn up, even if he's unemployed,' is a typical comment. Emergencies have eaten into the funds set aside for job-creation projects: the committee is currently trying to build a house for Marlene after her wooden shack collapsed.

However, no-one is short on determination. 'When the Campaign came to us we seized it, hugged it to ourselves and joined the fight,' says Marilda. She is young, bright and articulate. But the only work São Paulo has to offer her is cleaning the houses of the rich people down the road, for the Brazilian minimum wage of $20 a week.

Now, thanks to the committee, she plays her part helping her community organize for a better future. 'I've learned that there's a reward, however little it is that we give; when I see the gratitude in people's eyes it makes me so happy I feel like crying.' ■

Alex Shankland, a regular contributor to the NI, lives and works in São Paulo.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Where there is wealth there is poverty.

Brazil comes second among countries with the greatest disparities in income (Botswana is first). The richest tenth of the population absorbs half the national income, the poorest tenth claims less than one per cent; 32 million people suffer from chronic malnutrition and in the rural Northeast entire populations have been stunted by hunger.

The wealthy are obscenely wealthy. Just 18 large landowners control an area six times the size of Belgium. Huge industrial farms churn out tons of produce for international markets – Brazil leads the world in coffee and orange-juice exports and comes second, third and fourth in the world for soya, cocoa and poultry respectively.

Canada, on the other hand, is assessed by the United Nations Development Programme as having the highest 'human development' in the world. Strange, then, that 16 per cent of its population lives below the poverty line and foodbanks are serving increasing numbers of people.

There may be little comparison between the poor of the two countries, but the fact that Canada's poor are forced to depend on handouts is as much an indictment of social and political organization as are Brazil's swelling slums.

Working for change

Increasingly the alternatives are being found outside the money economy. Communal kitchens and Good Food Boxes don't look good in terms of Gross National Product, but they are great for people.

Movements such as the Campaign Against Hunger or FoodShare also demolish the myth of the 'useless poor'. It is opportunity that poor people lack, not a spirit of enterprise. After all, they are people first, even if others choose to define them by their poverty.

The Campaign in Brazil, with about three million volunteers and over 3,500 committees throughout the country, has managed to get dramatic food donations but is less successful with the structural aims of job creation and land reform. Challenging the status quo is more difficult than appealing for charity.

Ultimately the issue is one of equity – and conscience.

The Campaign Against Hunger
can be contacted at
IBASE
Rua Vincente de Souza, 29
Botafogo – 22251-070
Rio de Janeiro – RJ
Brazil
Tel: (+) 21 286 0348
Fax: (+) 21 286 0541

FoodShare Metro Toronto
238 Queen Street West
Toronto
Ontario M5V 1Z7
Tel: (+) 416 392 6653
Fax: (+) 416 392 6650

The NI Interview

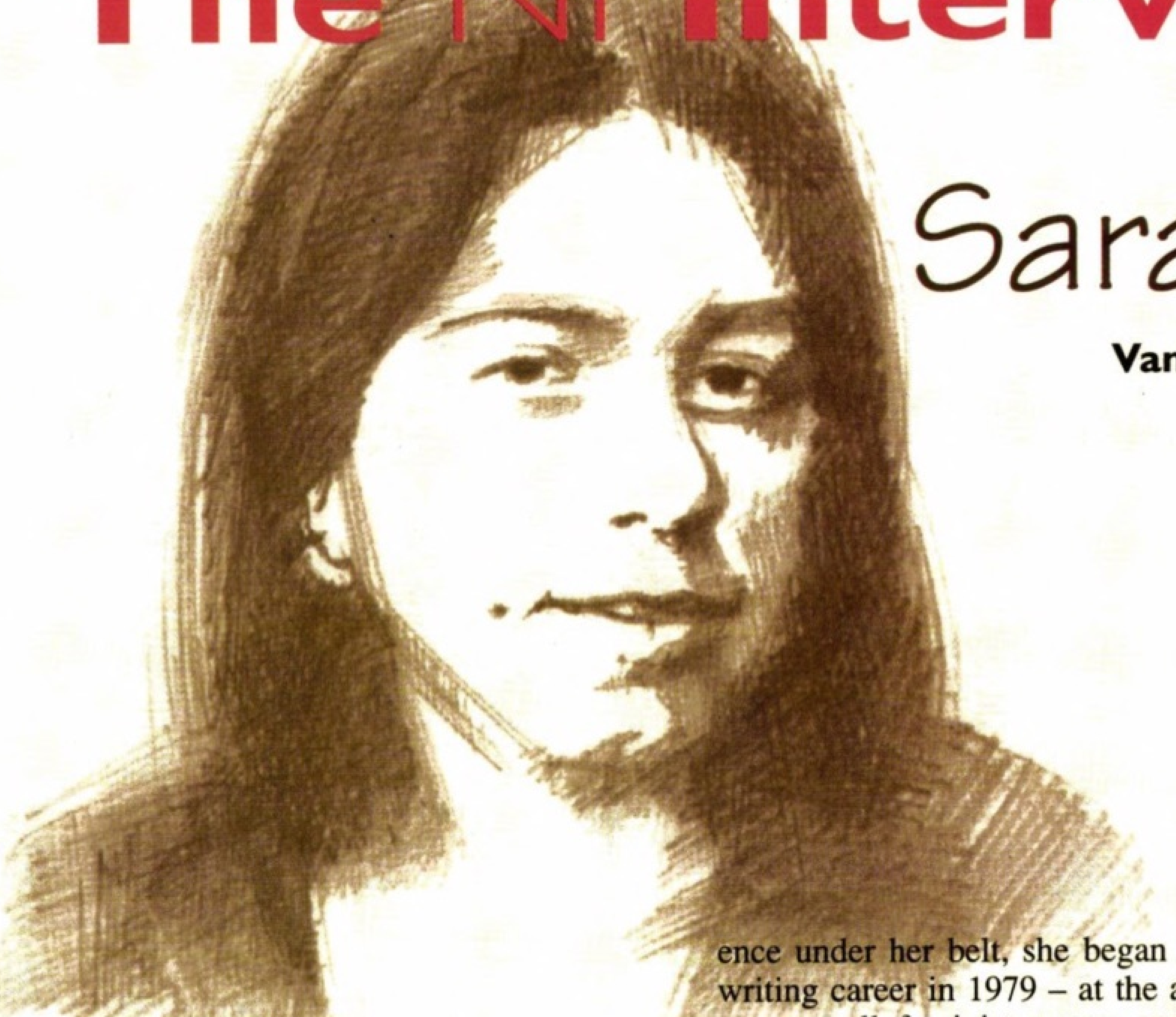


ILLUSTRATION: ALAN HUGHES

Sarah Schulman

Vanessa Baird meets a subversive with a sense of humour.

'WHAT'S a lesbian?' the kids in one of New York's most conservative Catholic schools innocently asked their teacher. The kids were doing what the balloon they had been given as they came into school that morning told them to do: 'Ask about lesbians.'

They had been given the balloons by a group of Lesbian Avengers, accompanied by a jaunty little band of musicians in Catholic school uniforms.

The New York education system had been taken over by conservative Catholics who were seeking to ban any mention of homosexuality in state schools.

'So we gave the kids the balloons *knowing* they would ask their teacher what a lesbian was,' Sarah Schulman, co-founder of the Lesbian Avengers says with a smile.

Subversion with humour is a trademark of the Avengers, who have earned quite a reputation for creative, witty and uncompromising actions. Not for the Avengers the ritual of marches, speeches, petitions and pickets. 'These are things that no-one ought to have to do again,' says Schulman, categorically. 'They are predictable, they don't work, they make people passive.'

Schulman's lack of patience with predictability comes out in her novels which are racy and politically-engaged affairs, set mainly in New York City and dealing with contemporary gay life there. AIDS features largely – as it has done in her own political life; she was involved in the HIV/AIDS campaign group for seven years.

Schulman was on a whistlestop tour of Britain, promoting her latest book *My American History** and meeting up with Avengers groups that had started in Europe. It was her first time in Oxford and she was prepared to be intimidated, she said – which seemed a likely story. A hardcore activist with years of political experience under her belt, she began her radical writing career in 1979 – at the age of 22 – on a small feminist paper, and seems to have breathed politics ever since.

Schulman and fellow activist Maxine Wolfe started the Lesbian Avengers two and a half years ago when they realized that the women in leadership in the mixed gay groups had all been trained in the feminist movement during the 1970s and 1980s. Younger women were only learning the basic political skills very slowly and were not getting into positions of leadership.

Lesbian Avengers drew up three principles: 'No theoretical discussion of any kind'; 'If you have an idea you have to do it'; 'If you disagree you can't just do a critique, you must propose an alternative'.

'Now that [the third] has been the most important, because most of those who have come to the Avengers have never had power and they don't believe that their ideas can be realized. So they get into this obstructionist, negative position in just saying what's wrong.'

Schulman does not have much time for 'consciousness-raising' these days. Far better to focus on actions that are creative with goals that are achievable.

The situation of gay people in the US today is increasingly paradoxical, according to Schulman. Gays are more 'out' and making demands on society. But at the same time they are becoming ghettoized as society is becoming more institutionally homophobic. Many had high hopes when Bill Clinton was elected President. 'The national gay leadership really went into the Democratic Party. They lost their grassroots focus and they started to count on Washington to get things done. But Clinton has done nothing for gay people or people with AIDS.'

In the meantime the Christian Right has started anti-gay ballot measures to deny gay people protection from discrimination in housing and employment. Instead of going for a national strategy they have put it to voters in backwater localities.

'Gays in these areas had to fight these issues on their own because the national groups were all in Washington. So we decided to start a project based on "Freedom Summer" – when students went to the South to help black people register their vote in 1964. We started by fighting an anti-gay ballot in a small conservative Catholic factory town called Lewiston, Maine. We lost.

'But then there was an anti-gay ballot in Idaho. This is a really scary, rural, white-supremacist state which has fascist groups like Aryan Nation. We sent eight Avengers full-time to Idaho for three months. We have such an authentic grassroots base we were able to do this without any national office – no paid staff, just by organizing. They campaigned door-to-door in small towns and rural areas explaining what the bill would do. We won by 0.2 per cent.'

This unexpected victory got coverage in the mainstream Left journal *The Nation*. But coverage of gay news in the Left press is not common. In the past this mattered less because the gay movement was large, politically progressive and so was its press. But things are changing.

'We have been seeing the emergence of gay conservatives for the first time. Some are real Right-wingers, the kind that supported Reagan. The others are gay "pure capitalists" who are interested in positioning the gay community as a consumer group that can be niche-marketed to. Now, as we know from niche-marketing to black people in the US, you may be presented on television or you can have your own brand of cigarettes but there's no correlation with your civil rights, or your political or economic power.'

Represented in the media or not, news of Lesbian Avenger activity gets around all the same. Ask Schulman how many Avengers there are and she throws her hands in the air and smiles. There are, she has heard, groups in Canada, Britain, France, Germany and Australia as well as right across the US.

'Even if the whole thing fell apart tomorrow we will have trained thousands of young women in basic organizing and they are going to be "out" and in leadership and that's a long-term success.' ■

* ***My American History: lesbian and gay life during the Reagan/Bush years*** **is published by Cassell.**

Reviews

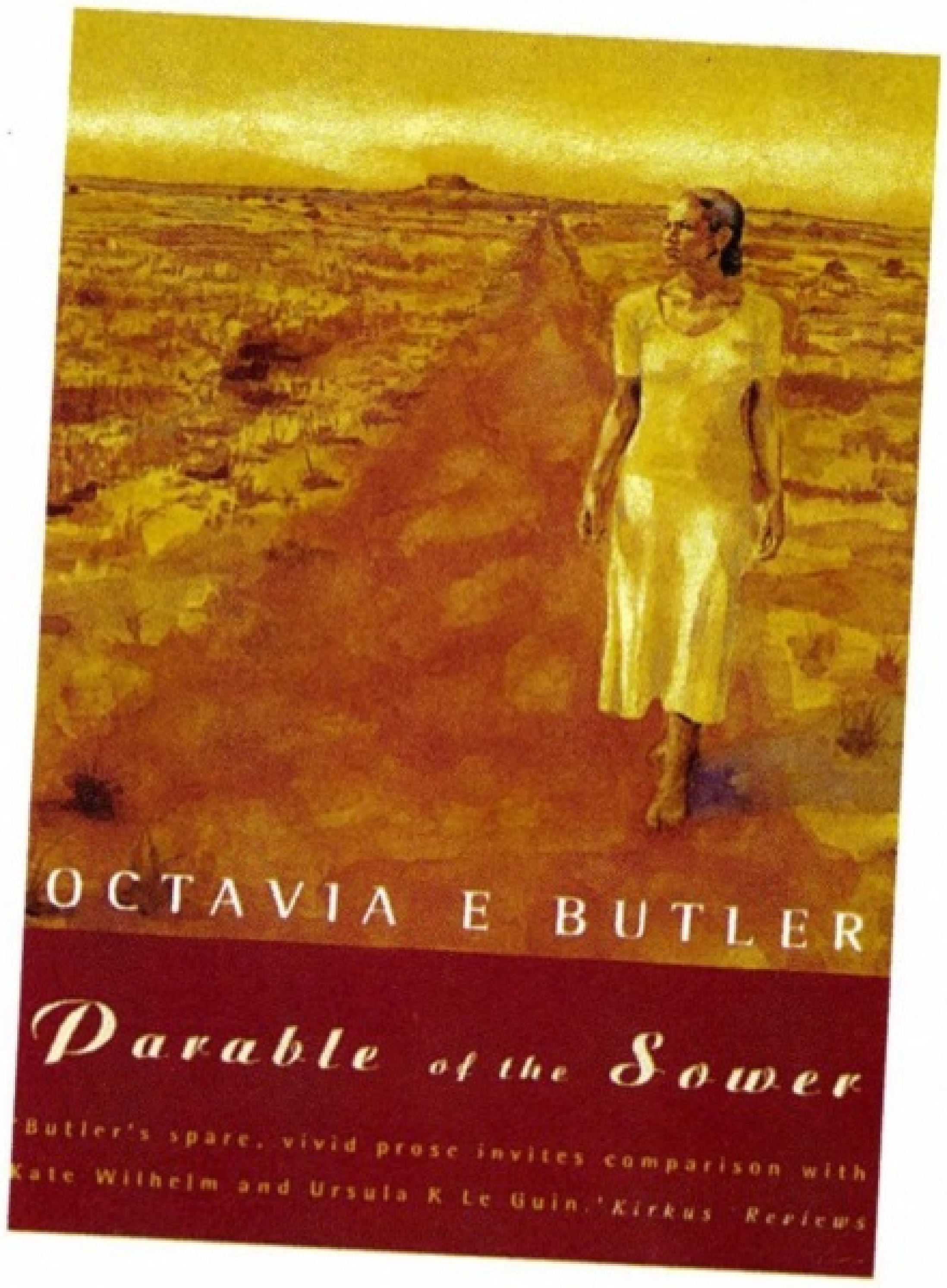
books

Parable of the Sower

by **Octavia E Butler**

(The Women's Press, ISBN 0 7043 4421 1)

SET IN A 'fortified' town in California in the year 2024, **Parable of the Sower** seems to have stepped both forward and backwards in time. The world inhabited by the young narrator, an African-American girl called Lauren Olamina, is in an advanced state of social, economic and environmental decay. The energy crisis means you can see stars in the sky and people go around on bicycles instead of cars. But rarely do they venture out, except as armed groups of families, cycling out into the corpse-ridden hills for essential target practice. School is an anachronism. Lauren, a preacher's daughter, is one of the few who can read. Her mother's drug addiction while pregnant has left Lauren with a shameful condition – 'hyperempathy'. If she sees a creature in pain she feels their pain and becomes temporarily disabled by it. This gives warmth, feeling and hope in the otherwise harsh world of Butler's vision. But it also means Lauren has to adopt a shoot-to-kill policy when attacked.


OCTAVIA E BUTLER
Parable of the Sower
'Butler's spare, vivid prose invites comparison with Kate Wilhelm and Ursula K Le Guin.' Kirkus Reviews

Parable of the Sower is a disturbing dystopia, made more so by the fact that it's entirely plausible. What Butler has done is to extend and accelerate trends which are evident in the world today. Her harrowing description of a massacre is no more violent than recent events in Rwanda or Bosnia. The social decay she describes can be seen today in Somalia – and in LA. Slavery makes its comeback in the book – as it has in contemporary Northeast Brazil. And the public space is filled with desperately poor, homeless people who can only survive by stealing or killing.

The central character – with her pocket full of seeds, her survivor's instinct and her own homespun spirituality – saves the novel from total despair. Unlike many of those around her, she does not avert her eyes from reality. At times, however, she seems a bit too good to be true – as though the author has been seduced by her own creation.

After an excellent start, the book tends to flag in the second half – ironically just as it gets increasingly action-packed. It becomes one damn violent thing after another, punctuated by a few, too few, tender and thoughtful moments. That aside, it's a compelling, vivid and convincingly imagined parable – and Butler's lucid prose is a treat.

Politics ☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆☆

music

Music for the Gods: The Fahnestock South Sea Expedition

by **Various Artists**

(Rykodisc RCD 10315)

Sacred Spirit: Chants and Dances of the Native Americans

by **Various Artists**

(Virgin CDV 2753 7243 39881 2 9)

Out of the Woods

by **Dr Didg**

(Hannibal HNCD 1384)

IN 1941 brothers Bruce and Sheridan Fahnestock boarded their schooner and charted a passage for Indonesia. With state-of-the-art recording equipment on board – which in those days meant weighty disc-cutters, 16-inch cellulose acetate discs and two miles of microphone cable – they captured the rare, beautiful sounds of the *gamelan* that can be heard on this album. If the Fahnestocks' trip seemed a little overzealous for two rich, young New Yorkers to undertake, so it was. They were also under secret orders from President Roosevelt to observe military defences in the area which the Japanese were planning to invade.

Such ulterior motives do not detract from the captivating quality of **Music for the Gods** which is the second release in Mickey Hart's Endangered Music Project. The music resounds with gentle chiming and hollow wood-block rhythms, its difficult syntax explained in some careful sleeve notes. Music like this will never exist again. *Gamelans* will, but tourism and technology have had their insidious effect on the music produced.

While **Music for the Gods** may provide pleasure for the purist, **Sacred Spirit** almost definitely will not. But it might delight the dancer. Its 11 tracks combine native American language chants with... well, to say 'non-native American' music would be putting it mildly. There are cellos, rumbling drums, Spanish guitars and strange aeolian sounds from banks of synthesizers. Images of a stark landscape inhabited by stoic people are conjured up. And the pitter patter of a subdued disco beat? Well, the record's (unnamed) creators could argue that dance is a liberating ritual in all cultures and point out that for each record sold a donation will be made to the Native Americans Rights Fund.

Dr Didg's debut album – **Out of the Woods** – provides a happier model for the meeting of cultures. The doctor, American-born physicist Graham Wiggins, took up the didgeridoo 13 years ago and after playing with the acclaimed band, Outback, went off to Australia's Elcho Island to live and study with aboriginal didg masters. Accompanied by guitarist Mark Revell and percussionist Ian Campbell, Wiggin's didg becomes an adaptable rhythm machine, leading the other musicians through some jazzy, ambient, African high-life and Latin shuffle numbers. Wiggins mainly avoids trying to replicate Aboriginal music, though he has a profound feeling for it. The breath-generated rhythms of the didg, he says, represent life itself. Which helps explain the feel-good factor pervading this most unusual album.

Dr Didg: a happier model for culture mix.

Politics ☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆☆
Politics ☆
Entertainment ☆☆
Politics ☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆

film

Before the Rain

directed by **Milcho Manchevski**

MACEDONIAN filmmaker Milcho Manchevski's inspiring, though bleak, debut film is a rare thing these days. There is something quite old-fashioned in the headlong way he treats political strife and manages to investigate nationalist struggles. Structured around three stories that interconnect, the film plays with notions of time to profound effect – Quentin Tarantino could learn a lesson here. The film's theme is the vicious circle of violence. It commences in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, where a young monk finds himself sheltering an Albanian Muslim girl wanted by a local gun-waving posse. Breaking his vow of silence, he offers to escort her to safety but this gesture proves to be futile in the end.

Meanwhile in London, a picture editor called Anne is working on a war-photography project and deliberating over her personal future. She finds herself torn between her husband and her lover, Aleksander, a prize-winning photojournalist who left Macedonia years ago. Each story impinges on the other as Manchevski meditates on the religious roots of the current conflicts in Eastern Europe as well as intimating how media coverage of the fighting implicates those who produce and consume the images. Everyone here has blood on their hands. With current debates about violence in cinema, **Before the Rain** is a searing reminder about the higher stakes. The guns and poses of the movie mob men seem pretty hollow compared to the real brutality experienced by those living and dying in various civil wars at the moment. Strikingly composed – Manchevski proves to have a painterly eye – it's a haunting film which tackles issues that are not easy to walk away from.

Politics ☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆

STAR RATING

Excellent	☆☆☆☆☆
Very good	☆☆☆☆
Good	☆☆☆
Fair	☆☆
Poor	☆

Reviews editor: **Vanessa Baird**

THE **CLASSIC**

Hand to Earth

... being the book that captures the joyous and unusual art of **Andy Goldsworthy.**

ANDY GOLDSWORTHY is one of a kind. He is a sculptor in so far as he moulds and shapes natural materials but he is worlds away from the monumentalism of a Moore or an Epstein and even further from the strutting power games of the Turner Prize bratpack. Born in Cheshire, England, in 1956, Goldsworthy began to gain recognition for his outdoor pieces in the early 1980s, with exhibitions and projects throughout the world. He is based in Dumfriesshire, Scotland and much of his best work has taken inspiration from the surrounding countryside.

If a label has to be pinned on what he does, it is best described as Land Art; work done in the countryside, utilizing natural materials. Working on site, Goldsworthy uses what is to hand – stone, water, earth, ice, leaves, twigs – to create pieces which draw on their surroundings but, in a variety of visual puns on nature, could only have been created by human hand. These relate to and become part of the landscape and have a finite life-span, determined by the materials and the conditions. Goldsworthy is happy to see this process of decay: 'Decay is part of the work. Implicit in each structure is its collapse.' This sense of collaboration with nature, working with the grain of what is there rather than imposing a dominant human vision, is central to an understanding of Goldsworthy's art.

Although all artworks inevitably become 'commodities' in the marketplace, Goldsworthy to some extent side-steps this dilemma by making a photographic record of his work. His approach to photography is deliberately simple; he uses standard film and lenses and no filters, emphasizing that the intention is not to replace the original work but to document it.

Goldsworthy's breakthrough came in 1989-90, with his 'snow sculptures' made at Grise Fiord in Canada's Northern Territories and during three days spent at the North Pole. The book which resulted from this trip – *Touching North* – is a haunting evocation of his experience.

In 1990 he had a major retrospective exhibition at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh. This brought rave reviews and a much wider public. The accompanying book, **Hand to Earth: Sculpture 1976 -1990**, is an affordable and comprehensive overview of his career, from early work such as intricate leaf and twig constructions to larger permanent works such as the Grizedale Forest tree sculptures or the monumental 'Earthworks' in County Durham, England. His most recent book *Stone* brings together work from the past three years, including some stunning pieces in the Australian outback.

Goldsworthy digs at the roots of our relationship with nature. He is conducting an interrogative dialogue with the fundamentals of our world: water, stone, earth, growing things and latterly, in his work with volcanic rock, fire. His work throws into serious doubt our presumed centrality in the ordering of things. Nothing emphasizes these doubts so much as the recurring image of the hole. He has made sculptures featuring holes in just about every conceivable material, sometimes to precarious effect. In 1982 an exhibit of his in the grounds of London's Serpentine Gallery had to be fenced off because it was considered a danger to the public

There is – physical danger apart – a palpable, almost primeval sense of menace in all the hole works, no matter how prosaic or unthreatening the materials. Goldsworthy says: 'I am drawn to holes with the same urge I have to look over the cliff... The black of a hole is like the flame of a fire. The flame makes the energy of fire visible. The black is the earth's flame – its energy...'

Although he is not party-political, he is a supporter of the Green Movement and his ecological concern counters the criticism that he is primarily out to shock. He says: 'If shock were the only purpose of my work I'd use bright paint – the shock *beyond* the shock is that these materials are *there* already.'

As well as his joyous enthusiasm for his craft, there is in Goldsworthy's art a deft and witty juggling with our preconceptions. For example, in 'The Wall that Went for a Walk' an otherwise unassuming dry-stone wall weaves drunkenly between a row of trees. And when he constructed a giant snowball for an exhibition in Japan, he was delighted to find the following day that, quite fortuitously, the surrounding snow melted overnight, leaving his snowball standing incongruously in the sunlight.

To see a Goldsworthy piece is to be exposed to an innocent wonder combined with an open and inclusive spirit. We are invited to carry on the process of asking questions about nature, about sculpture, about what it means to be human. Goldsworthy has described what he does as 'trying to touch rainbows': the marvel is that he can convince us that it might just be possible. ■

Peter Whittaker

***Hand to Earth: Sculpture 1976-1990** is published by Henry Moore Centre, 1990; **Touching North** is published by Fabian Carlsson/Graeme Murray, 1989; and **Stone** is published by Viking, 1994.*

Curiosities

QUESTIONS THAT HAVE ALWAYS INTRIGUED YOU ABOUT THE WORLD WILL APPEAR IN THIS, YOUR SECTION, AND BE ANSWERED BY OTHER READERS. PLEASE ADDRESS YOUR ANSWERS AND QUESTIONS TO 'CURIOSITIES'.

ASTRA / CAMERA PRESS

Unstoppable Maathai, showing the environmental award she won in 1993 in Edinburgh.

Whatever happened to Wangari Maathai, reported in the April 1992 issue of NI as having been clubbed unconscious? Did she recover and where is she now?

● Back in action and still working with the Green Belt Movement she founded in Nairobi, as far as I know. She seems to have recovered sufficiently from the injuries sustained during her arrest to have been a spokesperson for non-governmental organizations at the Earth Summit in Rio in June 1992. Earlier this year she delivered the Schumacher lecture, a series organized by the Schumacher College based in Devon, England. She is also listed as a member of the commission on Global Governance (which brings together such an unlikely combination of people as Barber Conable, Allan Boesak, Jacques Delors, Oscar Arias, Frank Judd and Maurice Strong) and is mentioned in their recently published report entitled *Our Global Neighbourhood.*

BJ Brown
Oxford, England

Which 'Third World' countries have democratic governments, free and non-fraudulent elections and good human-rights records?

● Not many countries in the world – whether in the South or the North – meet all of the above criteria. The US – where some states retain the death penalty – fails the human-rights test. Britain – with its lack of a written Constitution and its non-elected House of Lords – fails the democracy test. Some of the democracies in Latin America do rather better: Costa Rica and Nicaragua, for example. The new democracies of the Southern cone – Uruguay, Argentina and Chile – seem to have moved quite rapidly away from their oppressive past and are doing relatively well. In Africa, the new South Africa looks hopeful. Botswana, Zambia and Cape Verde aren't doing too badly.

However, it is all relative, and true democracy and a 'good' human-rights record – as opposed to one which is not too bad – are rare things indeed.

Sarah James
Glasgow, Scotland

AWAITING YOUR ANSWERS

The February 1995 issue of NI informed us that 1999 will be the International Year of Ageing. What other themes are planned for 1996, 1997 and 1998?

Andrew Leigh
Pennant Hills, Australia

Where does one get the seeds to grow a seedless grape vine?

James Phillips
Wigston, England

Is there any evidence that matriarchal cultures were (or are, where they exist) more egalitarian than patriarchal ones?

Martin Ferreira
Montreal, Canada

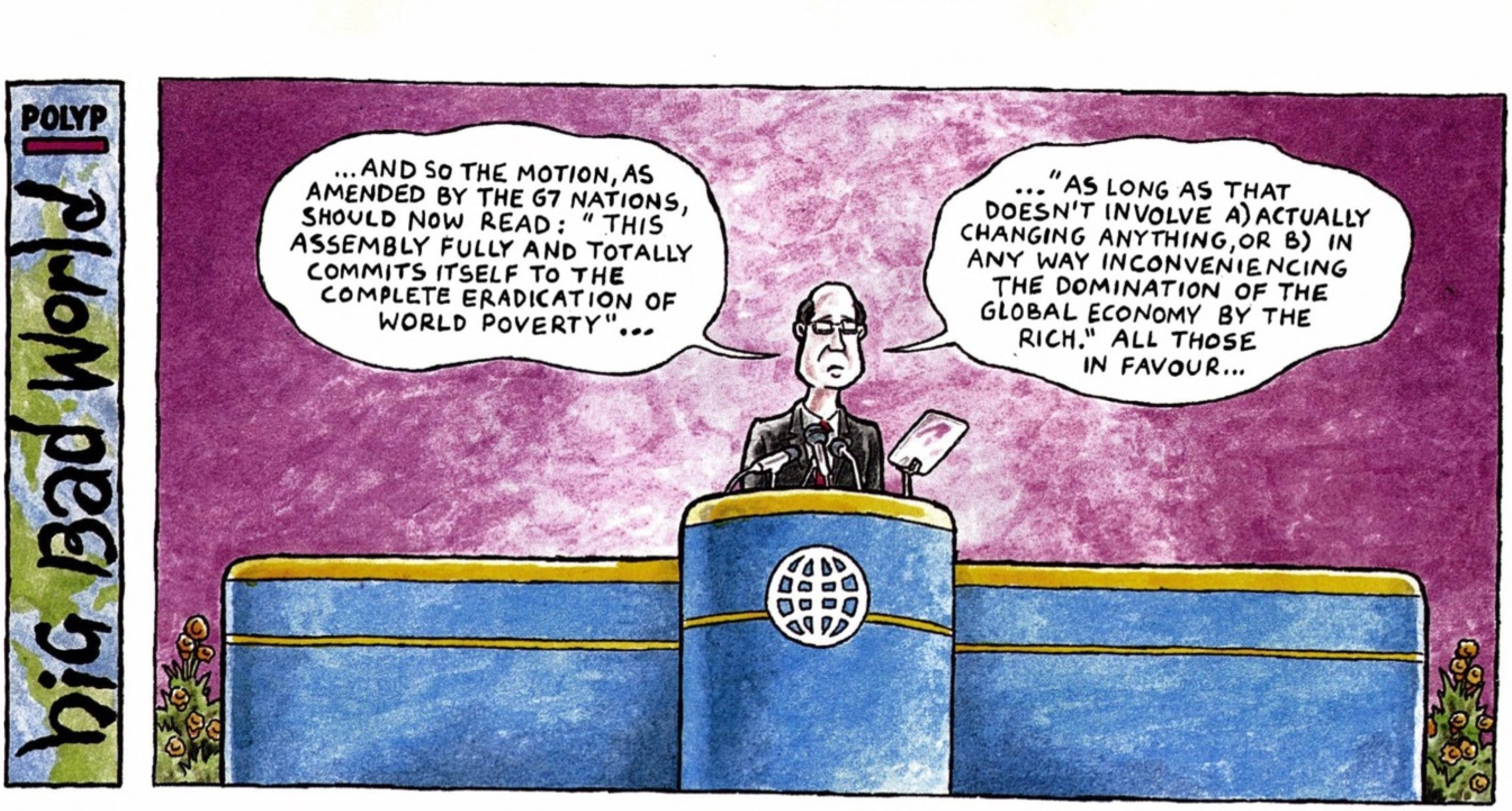
Last year Kenya's ruler, Daniel arap Moi, commented that he intended to channel aid towards people who supported him and away from those who did not. In the light of this, have any of the organizations that provide aid for Kenya changed their policies or taken steps to ensure that their aid really does go to those in need?

Michael Lumber
Granada, Spain

How did human beings learn to take hard, inedible seeds, grind them up, mix them with water and cook them to get something they could eat?

Susan Atherton
Telford, England

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ANSWERS PLEASE SEND THEM TO **CURIOSITIES, NEW INTERNATIONALIST, 55 RECTORY ROAD, OXFORD OX4 1BW, UK,** OR TO YOUR LOCAL NI OFFICE (SEE INSIDE FRONT COVER FOR ADDRESSES).


POLYP
big bad world
...AND SO THE MOTION, AS AMENDED BY THE G7 NATIONS, SHOULD NOW READ: "THIS ASSEMBLY FULLY AND TOTALLY COMMITS ITSELF TO THE COMPLETE ERADICATION OF WORLD POVERTY"...
..."AS LONG AS THAT DOESN'T INVOLVE A) ACTUALLY CHANGING ANYTHING, OR B) IN ANY WAY INCONVENIENCING THE DOMINATION OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY BY THE RICH." ALL THOSE IN FAVOUR...

Living death

Britain has political prisoners. **Ian Kentzer** is one of them.
He explains what's wrong with the mandatory life sentence for murder.

'Kill one person and you are called a murderer. Kill one million and you become a conqueror.'

Whatever truth lies in that statement, the gruesome act of murder never ceases to fascinate people. No matter how frequently the world's media swamp us with desensitizing images of untimely death in all its horrible guises, people respond, not with repulsion but with a morbid, disguised interest. Who has failed to follow the OJ Simpson case in America, the years of racial killings in South Africa, Bosnia's ethnic cleansing, the Gloucester murders in England, even Australia's old 'dingo' case? The list is geographically diverse and seemingly endless.

On a global scale murder ranges from genocide carried out by totalitarian states as a matter of policy, through a spectrum of less serious offences, down to the compassionate doctor who carries out a mercy killing. Some countries recognize that a scale of seriousness exists. Some countries do not. As a result the categorization of and punishment for murder varies tremendously from one country to the next.

Britain no longer passes the death penalty, unlike some states in the US. But it imposes a sentence of mandatory life imprisonment that is supposed to satisfy the public need for retribution and deterrence. It inflicts a living death on the convicted murderer. In the US there are different classifications of murder and subsequent defences, such as provocation, self-defence or manslaughter. But Britain has no such distinctions: anyone convicted of murder, regardless of the facts of the case, will be sentenced to mandatory life imprisonment.

Ian Kentzer: more 'lifers' in Britain than in the rest of the European Union put together.

IAN KENTZER

Why then is the time actually served by lifers dictated by politicians and not by the trial judge who has considered all the facts of the case? The answer is a damning criticism of British politics.

Judges who pass a mandatory life sentence write to the Lord Chief Justice recommending the time to be served. The Lord Chief Justice adds his views and sends the case on to the Home Secretary. For many years this was a secret process. The lifer was led to believe that the 'tariff' (the minimum period of incarceration) was decided by the judiciary.

In 1993 the Law Lords ruled that lifers should be given the gist of the 'secret' information. A potential human-rights violation was thereby exposed. It transpired that in 60 per cent of the cases the Home Secretary had taken it upon himself to ignore the recommendations of the trial judge and the Lord Chief Justice and increased the 'tariff' dramatically. This meant that many lifers were in effect serving sentences imposed not by the judiciary but by the Government.

There is no legislation which permits political interference in judicial decisions. Yet political meddling persists throughout the life sentence; transfer between prisons and 'recategorization' for good behaviour is decided in secret by ministerial underlings at the Home Office's Lifer Management Unit.

Any eventual decision to release a lifer is made by the Home Secretary and is based on three criteria: retribution and deterrence, the risk to the public, and how public confidence in the criminal justice system might be affected. The third criteria only came into effect in 1993 when it was introduced by the current Home Secretary, Michael Howard. It means that while 'law and order' are high on the political agenda lifers must languish in prison.

Lifers in Britain now serve an average minimum of 15 years. They have in effect become political prisoners. England and Wales now hold in excess of 3,100 mandatory lifers, representing more people incarcerated for life than in the rest of the European Union combined. Britain's lifer population is growing by an average of 250 every year; not quite as drastic as in those US states that operate the 'three strikes and you're out' policy, but alarming nonetheless.

Judges in Britain must pass the same mandatory life sentence on the woman who murders her brutish husband after she has suffered years of physical and mental abuse, the doctor convicted of a compassionate mercy killing, and the professional criminal who kills in cold blood. This disparity is now widely recognized. Radical calls for the abolition of the mandatory life sentence have increased.

In 1993 the Prison Reform Trust sponsored an Independent Committee on the Penalty for Homicide, chaired by a former Lord Chief Justice, Lord Lane. Contributions were sought from the judiciary, victim-support groups, academics from as far afield as Australia, the Prison Service and lifers themselves.

The Committee concluded that the mandatory life sentence should indeed be abolished. In its place judicial powers should allow sentences for murder to be *up to a maximum* of life imprisonment. This decision was partly based on reports from Australia's New South Wales Legislature, which in 1982 abolished the mandatory life sentence for murder. The state of Victoria followed suit in 1986. There has been no increase in homicide since then.

Commenting in *The Times* Lord Lane wrote: 'Automatic life imprisonment for murder is anachronistic, potentially unjust and needs to be abolished. Most murders are not truly heinous and it should be up to the courts, not the Home Secretary, to decide on punishments.' The report of the Committee, which took a year to compile and publish, was rejected by Michael Howard within one hour of receiving it.

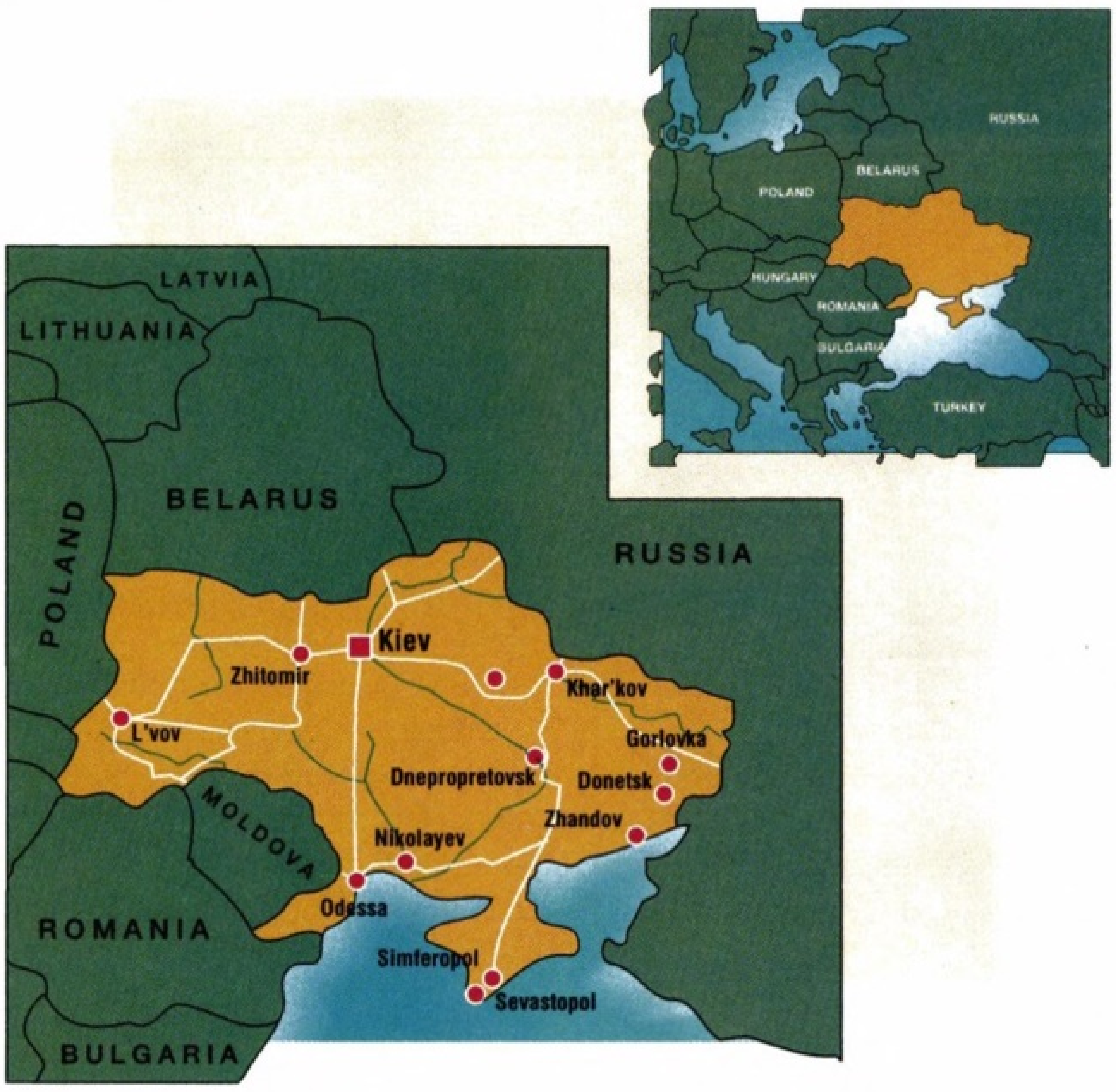
A great deal of publicity has recently been given to the case of Private Clegg, a British soldier convicted of murder while on duty in Northern Ireland. Mr Howard is now under immense pressure to reconsider his position. Realistically he has only two options open to him: either to introduce a separate charge for serving members of the armed forces, or to abolish the mandatory life sentence completely.

If he fails to act soon, then the final stage of the campaign to abolish a sentence which imposes a living death will lie in the European Court of Human Rights. The British Government has taken far too much power to itself, and neither lifers nor most reformers will accept political control over a criminal justice system which stems from Magna Carta and holds that accused people may only be tried by their peers and punished accordingly. ■

Ian Kentzer is serving a mandatory life sentence. He has won two consecutive Koestler Awards for literature and has published a short collection of poetry. He can be contacted as CV2582, HM Prison Full Sutton, Moor Lane, Yorks YO4 IPS, UK.

Country profile

Ukraine



On a sunny day on Kiev's leafy Kreschatik Street, giggling teenagers line up outside the ice-cream stands and the ubiquitous street photographers arrange proud couples in romantic poses on the main square. Only a few elderly people, eyes downcast, beg at the edges of the crowd. They are chiefly ignored.

To all appearances the city is carrying on business as usual, much like a rundown version of the West. But Kiev, like all of Ukraine, is struggling against a Soviet-era mentality as thick as the Berlin Wall and even more unyielding. The majority of people, trying to survive in the midst of economic turmoil, turn to black-market dealing that sidesteps punitive taxes and outmoded bureaucratic regulations.

In spite of its waning popularity in some parts of the country, political independence has been hard won. Dominated by Russia since the eighteenth century, Ukraine fought fiercely but unsuccessfully to preserve its identity after the 1917 Revolution. Soviet planning devastated the country, dismantling the burgeoning agricultural economy and starving to death six million people.

After the Second World War Moscow redoubled its efforts to control the rich expanse of land that forms one of the largest countries in Europe. By the 1960s the Ukrainian Communist Party was among the most dedicated and conservative of the Soviet empire.

Geographical and political closeness to Russia created problems that lasted after independence in 1991. With an economy suddenly unchained from the centralized Soviet system, Ukraine sank into a severe depression, convincing many they should reunite with Russia. Repairing the massive damage of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe also wreaked economic havoc as Moscow's aid dried up.

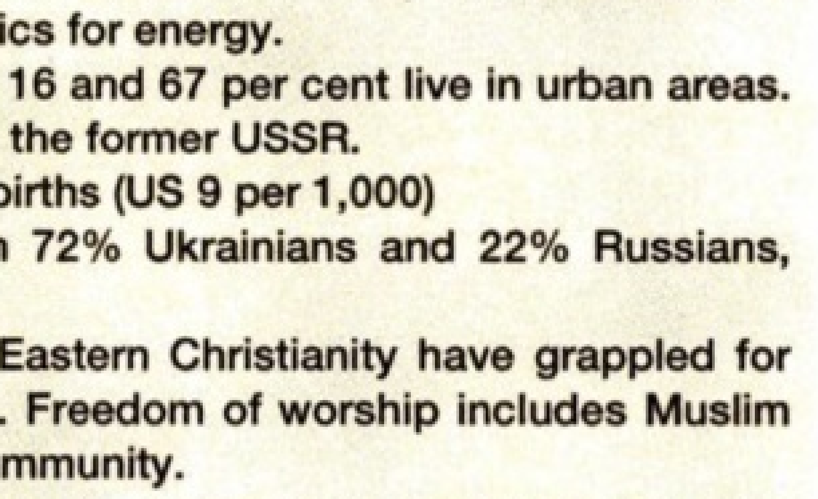
Today divisions in the country are striking, with some Ukrainian speakers in the west supporting militant nationalists and Russian speakers in the east and south opting for closer union with Russia.

The lush seacoast resort area of Crimea, former play-ground of the Soviet élite, is now one of the poorest parts of the country, in conflict with Kiev and embroiled in its own internal power struggle – it elected its own president on a platform of re-union with Russia. He has now been deposed by Kiev. Mean-while Russia and Ukraine are still bargaining over the division of the costly former Soviet Black Sea Fleet based at Sevastopol and the surrender of Soviet nuclear weapons.

Endowed with natural beauty, enormous natural resources and a highly educated population, Ukraine has great potential for raising living standards. But the challenges are also daunting. While drawing aid from the IMF to support his reform program, President Leonid Kuchma must convince a largely conservative parliament to support the very changes the politicians oppose. And while meeting IMF targets he must also try to rebuild a social safety net which is frayed to the breaking-point. Perhaps it is not surprising that, when asked if he was glad to be elected president last July, Kuchma answered glumly, 'No'.

Olivia Ward

AT A GLANCE



NIKOLAI G IGNATIEV / CAMERA PRESS

Leader President Leonid Kuchma

Economy GNP per capita $3,700 (US GNP per capita is $22,240).

Monetary unit: Karbovanets (transitional currency, planned to be replaced by the Hryvnia).

Main exports: Base metals, chemicals, minerals, wheat, sugar beet.

Main imports: Oil and gas, machinery, consumer goods. Ukraine is highly industrialized. Industries based on vast mineral resources like the coal reserves in Donets'k Basin and the iron ore in Kryvgy Rih. Grain production has tumbled since independence and it is dependent on other former Soviet republics for energy.

People 52 million. 22 per cent are under 16 and 67 per cent live in urban areas. Population growth rate was the lowest in the former USSR.

Health Infant mortality 14 per 1,000 live births (US 9 per 1,000)

Culture Mainly Slavic, divided between 72% Ukrainians and 22% Russians, with a Tatar minority in Crimea.

Religion: Three conflicting branches of Eastern Christianity have grappled for supremacy since the fall of communism. Freedom of worship includes Muslim Tatars and a small but thriving Jewish community.

Languages: Ukrainian (official), Russian. A controversy over granting the Russian language official status is still unresolved.

Sources: *UNICEF; State of World Population 1994; Ukrainian Department of Health; Ukrainian Department of Finance; The Economist; Human Development Report 1994; Microsoft Encarta 95.*

Never previously profiled

NI star rating

EXCELLENT	★★★★★
GOOD	★★★★
FAIR	★★★
POOR	★★
APPALLING	★

STAR RATINGS

INCOME DISTRIBUTION ★★
A tiny élite and criminal mafia control large amounts of wealth; most people live at subsistence level.

LITERACY ★★★★★
At least 95 per cent. The collapse of the economy may start to damage these high rates, though.

SELF-RELIANCE ★★
Struggling to recover from centrally planned Soviet economy. High dependence on Russia, IMF and Western aid.

FREEDOM ★★★★
Media uncensored, political spectrum runs from communists to extreme right-wing nationalists.

POSITION OF WOMEN ★★★
Communist equality ideal never realized. Women educated but poorly paid with worst jobs, highest unemployment, lowest political representation.

LIFE EXPECTANCY ★★★★
70 years in 1992, but starting to fall with the economic downturn and the spread of poverty.

POLITICS

NI ASSESSMENT ★★★
The still-new Kuchma Government is dancing to the tune of the IMF – and perhaps it has no alternative. But the IMF's money will have less impact than its insistence on sweeping market reforms which are destroying the traditional standards of social welfare.

WANTED!

EARTHWATCH • RESEARCH TEAM •

- **Track the mighty Nile Crocodile**
- **Record New Zealand's Dusky Dolphins**
- **Caring hands to protect Carribbean Turtles**
- **Monitor Zimbabwe's Maternal Health Care**

Your help is needed urgently in unusual locations on Earthwatch expeditions around the world. Whilst being active for the planet, you will enjoy training, lecture programmes & field work for a share of the total project costs. Projects exist to suit all interests, no special skills required.

Earthwatch is the world's largest science foundation matching paying volunteers with researchers who need help on their environmental & cultural projects worldwide. Membership of Earthwatch is open to all those interested in the planet's well being - especially those keen on lending a hand. Members have access to over 400 teams of 2-3 weeks in 50 countries, receive our colour magazine & detailed research briefings containing the latest news & discoveries. Come & rub shoulders with the experts. You'll remember it for the rest of your life.

Call us now, or write (enclosing stamp) for further information

GIVE TWO WEEKS TO SAVE THE EARTH

EARTHWATCH

AN ADVENTURE TO BE PROUD OF

Belsyre Court/NI 57 Woodstock Road Oxford OX2 6HU
Tel: 01865 311600 Fax: 01865 311383
Charity Number 327017

DON'T WASTE MONEY ON AIR FARES!

CALL NOW FOR OUR EXCLUSIVE AIR FARES TO ALL DESTINATIONS
★ WORLDWIDE ★

KEY TRAVEL

92 - 96 EVERSHOLT STREET
LONDON NW1 1BP
Telephone: 071 387 4933
Fax: 071 387 1090
ABTA IATA

Justice 2000

The campaign of the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers

"If ever a time shall come when in this city only the rich can enjoy the law as a doubtful luxury, when the poor who need it most cannot have it, when only a golden key will unlock the door to the courtroom, the seeds of revolution will be sown, the firebrand of revolution will be lighted and put in the hands of men, and they will alomost be justified in the revolution which will follow".

Lyman Abbott, 1901.

Lawyers need to strive to achieve their role in the transformation of society and the protection of justice. With this campaign, the Haldane Society aims to start a debate that will generate principles informing that struggle, both now and in a future democratic society here and internationally.

For further details: HSSL, 20/21 Tooks Court, London EC4A. 071 242 2897

EXPEDITIONS TO

Tanzania Uganda Vietnam

Frontier expeditions give you the chance to participate in environmental conservation projects around the world. We work alongside local people and develop strategies with them to protect areas of environmental importance while considering the needs of the local population. As a Frontier volunteer, you will see some of the most remote, beautiful and largely unexplored areas of the world and help to ensure their future protection.

Frontier expeditions are not courses or adventure holidays; they exist to allow individuals to make a practical contribution to world conservation.

If you think you're ready to make a real difference to the world around you contact me now for an information pack.

Emma Fields, FRONTIER, 77 Leonard Street, London EC2A 4QS
071-613 2422

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WORK ABROAD ...THE YEAR OFF HANDBOOK

Now available ... the **1995** edition of **THE YEAR OFF HANDBOOK** ... tells you how to get out of recession-hit Britain and spend up to a year working & travelling the world – **AND GET PAID FOR IT!** **HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO:** Work as ground crew for hot-air ballooning companies in America, France or Switzerland? Ranch-hand in New Zealand or Australia? Deck-Hand on a Prawn Trawler off the coast of Queensland? Spend a month or two crewing on yachts in the Caribbean,Mediterranean or USA? Or start a serious career in highly-paid and booming Hong Kong? Disaster Relief with *Medecins Sans Frontiéres*? Work at a European ski-resort this winter... or in the New Zealand Alps next summer? Help build bush schools & clinics in Namibia? White-Water Rafting in Zimbabwe? Scuba Diving in Malaysia or Belize? Teach English in Japan, Korea, Taiwan? Or join expeditions in South America, Africa or Asia? A month on a Kibbutz in Israel? Conservation work in Siberia or Chile? Work on a travelling fair across America? Or join the Peace Brigades in Sri Lanka or Guatemala? Work with children at an American summer camp? Opportunities throughout Europe? The best **Round The World** routes? And much, much more ... all in **THE YEAR OFF HANDBOOK** ... **including the best ways to get your trip sponsored by a company or youth trust.**

Publisher's Statement – Roger Jackson, the author of this detailed publication, has spent the last **11 years** actually doing **ALL** of these things. Now he has written this guide showing how anyone can enjoy similar experiences. **And enhance your CV & job prospects when you return. Order now – you won't regret it!**

For your copy of **THE YEAR OFF HANDBOOK** send cheque/PO for £9.95 (payable to **Sabre Publishing Ltd**) to: **Sabre Publishing Ltd, Sabre House, 129 Mercers Road, London N19 4PX. OR CALL FREEPHONE 0800 393 585 FOR CREDIT CARD ORDERS (24 HRS, ORDERS ONLY)**

GUARANTEE – if you are not COMPLETELY satisfied with **THE YEAR OFF HANDBOOK**, return it within 28 days for a full refund.

Access VISA

Quakers have no creeds and no priesthood, but we do believe that there is that of God in everyone.

FREE **"A Light that is Shining"** An introduction to the Quakers written in an interesting and readable way from Q.I.S. (NI), Friends' House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

Name: ____________________

Address: ____________________

____

____________________ Postcode ________

CLASSIFIED

UK ADVERTISERS: £1.25 per word plus VAT. Minimum order 30 words – £37.50 plus VAT. Discount on three or more advertisements subject to negotiation.

COPY DATE: six weeks in advance of cover date, e.g. 17th April for June issue. Classified advertisements should be prepaid, cheques payable to: New Internationalist Publications Ltd., 55 Rectory Road, Oxford OX4 1BW, UK.

NORTH AMERICAN ADVERTISERS: $2.50 per word. Minimum order 30 words – $75. Please contact: Ian McKelvie at Box 506, Osgoode, Ontario KOA 2WO. Tel/Fax: (613) 826-1003.

SERVAS suggests that you may foster international peace by becoming a traveller and/or host in its worldwide network of international hospitality and friendship. Please send a stamped addressed envelope. *North America and Canada: US Service Committee NI, 11 John Street, Room 706, New York, NY 10038. Australia: Servas Australia NI, 16 Cavill Court, Vermont South, Vic. 3133. Rest of the world: Servas International NI, PO Box 1035 Edinburgh EH3 9JQ, UK.*

SENDING PERSONAL EFFECTS, BAGGAGE, FREIGHT ABROAD? Contact the specialists. *Express Export Services Ltd., 143 Wardour Street, London W1, UK on 0171-734 8356/7/8.*

International humanity

Much-travelled folk soon discover that, wherever they are in the world, basic human nature and basic human needs are the same. All peoples need a sufficiency of food and clothing, proper housing and hygienic conditions in which to live. Apart from that for real happiness they need freedom of thought, of association and of movement. They need to be able to read and say what they like and above all they need friendly relationships, affection, love, trust and an absence of the fear that others will harm them. Theosophy or the Ancient Wisdom teaches that spiritually all people are of one family owing reasonable allegiance to each other. This seems like right thinking.

To know more about Theosophy write to -

The Blavatsky Trust, (N2)
Avalon, Little Weston, Yeovil,
Somerset BA22 7HP.

Collections from anywhere in the UK. Goods shipped to all parts of the world safely and economically. AMEX, VISA and ACCESS accepted.

SAY NO TO ALL WAR Join the Anglican Communion's movement for peace. Write: *Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, 11, Weavers End, Hanslope, Milton Keynes, MK19 7PA UK. Tel: (01666) 825249. (A registered charity) New Zealand: A.P.F., 332 West Tamaki Road, Glenn Innes Auckland 6. USA: Episcopal Peace Fellowship, PO Box 28156, Washington DC 20038.*

WORLD GOODWILL Together all people of goodwill are building the New Humanity. Free quarterly newsletter on Family, Drugs, UN, Global Spirituality, Development. Papers on meditation, Ageless Wisdom etc. *World Goodwill, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EF, UK.*

JOURNEY LATIN AMERICA Low cost flights and escorted group holidays. Fully bonded tour operator ABTA 86321 ATOL 2828 AITO. *Journey Latin America, 16 Devonshire Road, London W4 2HD, UK. Tel: 0181 747 8315*

NATURAL FRIENDS is a unique friendship/contact agency. If you seek other sincere, **single** people who share your important concerns, you can find success by joining our very large, nationwide membership. For full details, please send a stamp to *Natural Friends (NI), 15 Benyon Gardens, Culford, Suffolk, IP28 6EA, UK. Tel: 01284-728315 (anytime).*

WANT AN OUT OF PRINT BOOK? Perhaps we can help. We need only the title and author. Fiction or non-fiction, any subject. No success no charge. Overseas enquiries welcome. *DC Books, 5 Exeter Drive, Spalding, Lincs. PE11 2DY.*

SPIRITUAL SAFARIS – SOUTHERN INDIA Visit the places (and people) of historical *and current* significance. Guided group tours – also independent travellers' service. All clients' money fully protected. *Spiritual Safaris, 35 Bedford Square, Brighton BN1 2PL. Tel: 0127-372 5591* (24 hours).

INTERNATIONAL PEN FRIENDS Our club has over 300,000 members in 156 countries, all types of people, all ages. Individual and group (schools etc) membership available. *Details from IPF, 37 Longmeadow Drive, Dinas, Powys, S. Glamorgan CF64 4TB.*

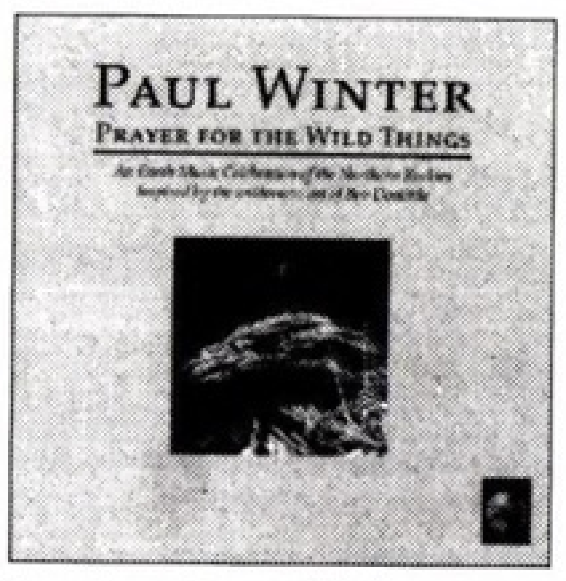
In celebration of our sacred home planet

one village *presents...*

a Paul Winter recording with the voices of 27 birds and mammals

Native American singing and drumming

Paul Winter soprano sax and The Earth Band



An earth music celebration:

Prayer for the Wild Things

cd £12.99; *cassette* £6.99
plus £1 per order towards p&p

one village *music (NI),*
Charlbury Oxfordshire OX7 3SQ

Music to inspire, to reflect, to challenge, to unite us with the mystery and pulse of our miraculous planet

A.S. NEILL'S SUMMERHILL SCHOOL founded in 1921. Our famous "free" school offers: Non-compulsory lessons to GCSE; A democractic, self-governing rural community; A non-authoritarian, informal atmosphere. A genuine alternative. An education in living. Vacancies for 7-12 year olds. *Apply: Summerhill School, Leiston, Suffolk IP16 4HY for prospectus and information on visitors' days. Tel: 01728 830540*

ANCESTRY TRACING PUBLISHERS

Offer part/full time opportunities locally for inexperienced people requiring interesting work over £4 hourly, flexible hours, any age. Apply enclosing self-addressed envelope: *Ancestry Connection (1023M), P.O. Box 24, Abbey Road, Torquay, TQ2 5XO.*

Blazing Saddles

¡CUBA!

2-WEEK GROUP CYCLE TOURS

An irresistible blend of sights, sounds and rhythms make Cuba a unique cycling experience.

Hotel accommodation, full board and complete back-up services.

May, September, November and December departures.

Blazing Saddles with Progressive Tours Ltd. ABTA and CAA (ATOL447) bonded.

Please ring or fax for brochure on

0171-625 6425

or write to Blazing Saddles, 21 Esmond Road, London NW6 7HF.

LAMBETH
SHAD

Come to live and work in London

with a young, friendly, supportive independent living scheme. Are you 18-30? Do you have 4-6 months spare to work as a volunteer on a one-to-one basis with a disabled person to enable them to live independently in their own home? Benefits include:

- £50 per week
- Free accommodation
- Monthly travelcard
- Generous time off
- Volunteer social life
- Close proximity to central London and all it offers!
- Excellent work experience and training
- Awareness of disability issues
- An adventure!

Immediate vacancies for women and throughout the year for both sexes.

For an information pack please contact Pamela Harrison at: *Lambeth SHAD, Unit 3, 11 Mowll Street, London SW9 6BG. Tel: 071 735 2266.*

Lambeth SHAD is working towards being an equal opportunities employer.

IF YOU ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE NEW INTERNATIONALIST ON TAPE, COULD YOU PLEASE CONTACT: VANESSA BAIRD NEW INTERNATIONALIST, 55 RECTORY ROAD, OXFORD OX4 1BW, INDICATING WHETHER YOU ARE ALREADY A SUBSCRIBER OR WOULD LIKE TO BECOME ONE.

ADVERTISING IN THE NEW INTERNATIONALIST

If you would like to advertise in the classified section of **NI** please call our ADVERTISING SALES OFFICE ON (01384) 373421

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS

The Department of Politics is a major focus for postgraduate study and research. It has a particular interest in democratisation and industrial politics. The Department has a large and vibrant graduate school with many students at both Master's and Research level - in fact one of the biggest in the UK. These students create an exciting climate for study and contribute their varied perspectives and personal experiences. Many of the students are from overseas and bring with them specific and important personal experiences. Students in the Department also mix regularly with students from the Departmental Centres, the Centre for European Studies; the Centre for the Study of Democratisation; the Centre for Industrial Policy and Performance and the University's Centre for Development Studies and African Studies Unit.

MA in The Politics of International Resources & Development

This is an 11-month MA which provides for detailed analysis of the changing contemporary international political economy, the politics of development, and of the key social and political themes underpinning recent world events.

MA in Democratic Theory and Process

This 10-month MA covers key issues of democracy and democratisation, with core modules on democratic theory and on problems of democratic consolidation. It covers both established democracies and questions of the transition to democracy. The course is recognised by the ESRC and carries their 'R' rating for research training. There is an ESRC quota award available for this course.

MA in Industrial Policy and Performance

This new 11-month MA offers postgraduate students the opportunity to explore the latest theoretical and empirical material on the relationship between states and economies in advanced capitalist countries, and to assess the impact of that relationship on industrial performance, competitiveness and growth.

MA in European Studies

An interdisciplinary degree on Europe in its broadest sense, with specialist options available in Political Science, Economics, History, Law and Culture. A modern language option may also be taken.

PhD Research

Applications are invited from graduates with a first or upper second class honours degree or Master's degree to pursue PhD programmes in development, European Community, Industrial Policy and democratisation.

All programmes of study can be taken on a part-time or full-time basis. A limited number of scholarships are also available.

Applicants should write to: Mrs A M Land, Department of Politics, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT for an application form and further details, or telephone: 0113 233 4383, fax: 0113 233 4400.

Promoting excellence in teaching, learning and research.

Birzeit University, Palestine

Birzeit University, an independent Palestinian university 26km north of Jerusalem, offers international students and visitors the opportunity to combine study of the Arabic language and Palestinian society, while experiencing the country's political and social realities.

International Summer Programme, 1995

A six week programme during July and August. Includes courses on Arabic, Palestine and Middle Eastern Studies.

Palestine and Arabic Studies Programme

A year-long programme of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies.

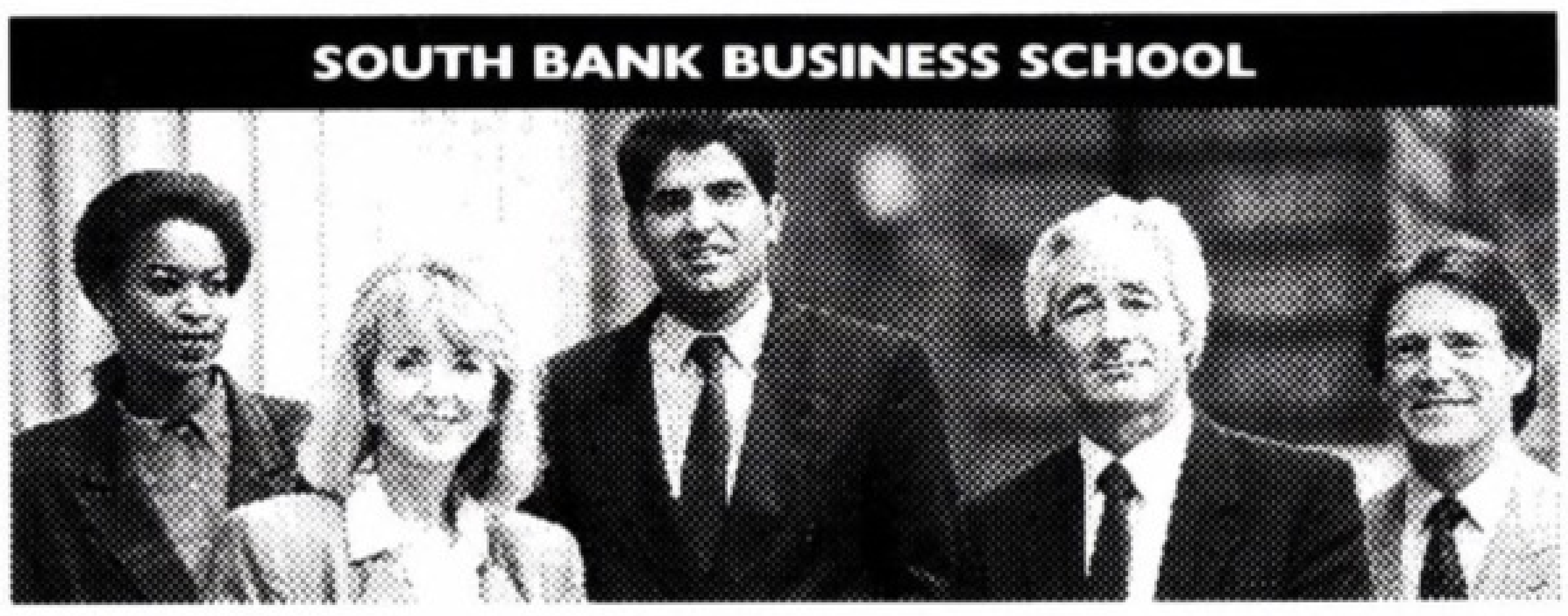
FoBZU Study Tour

A ten day tour of the Occupied Territories in late August, visiting universities, refugee camps, hospitals and meeting students, academics, journalists etc. There is no better way to gain first hand experience of the situation in a short period of time.

For more information, contact:

Friends of Birzeit University
21 Collingham Road, London SW1 0NU
Tel: 0171-373 8414 Fax: 0171 835 2088

SOUTH BANK BUSINESS SCHOOL



STUDY FOR A PART-TIME MSc IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

This innovative and timely MSc degree taught by staff with a wide range of expertise in the development of Africa, Asia and Latin America, includes the following units, each of which can be taken as a short course:

- International Trade
- Agrarian Policies
- The State, Human Rights and Development
- Gender Issues
- Images of Development
- Research on a development topic of your choice

For further details and an application form please contact: The Course Director on 0171-815 5769 or The Course Administrator, Caroline Gordon on 0171-815 5783. Fax: 0171-815 5799. South Bank Business School, South Bank University, 103 Borough Road, London SE1 0AA.

The University of Choice

SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY
• LONDON •

INTERNATIONAL LIVING

Live in a multi-cultural community.
Explore the world with fellow students from 20–25 nations.
Follow the newest trends in world politics, economy and society.
Learn about Europe as seen by Europeans, Africa as seen by Africans, Asia as seen by Asians. . .
Benefit from our experienced, well qualified teaching staff from around the world.

"You helped me open the doors I couldn't open myself..." *Ex-student*

UN designated
Peace Messenger

The International People's College,
1 Montebello Alle,
DK - 300 Helsingør, DENMARK (NI)
Tel: 4921 3361 Fax: 4921 2128